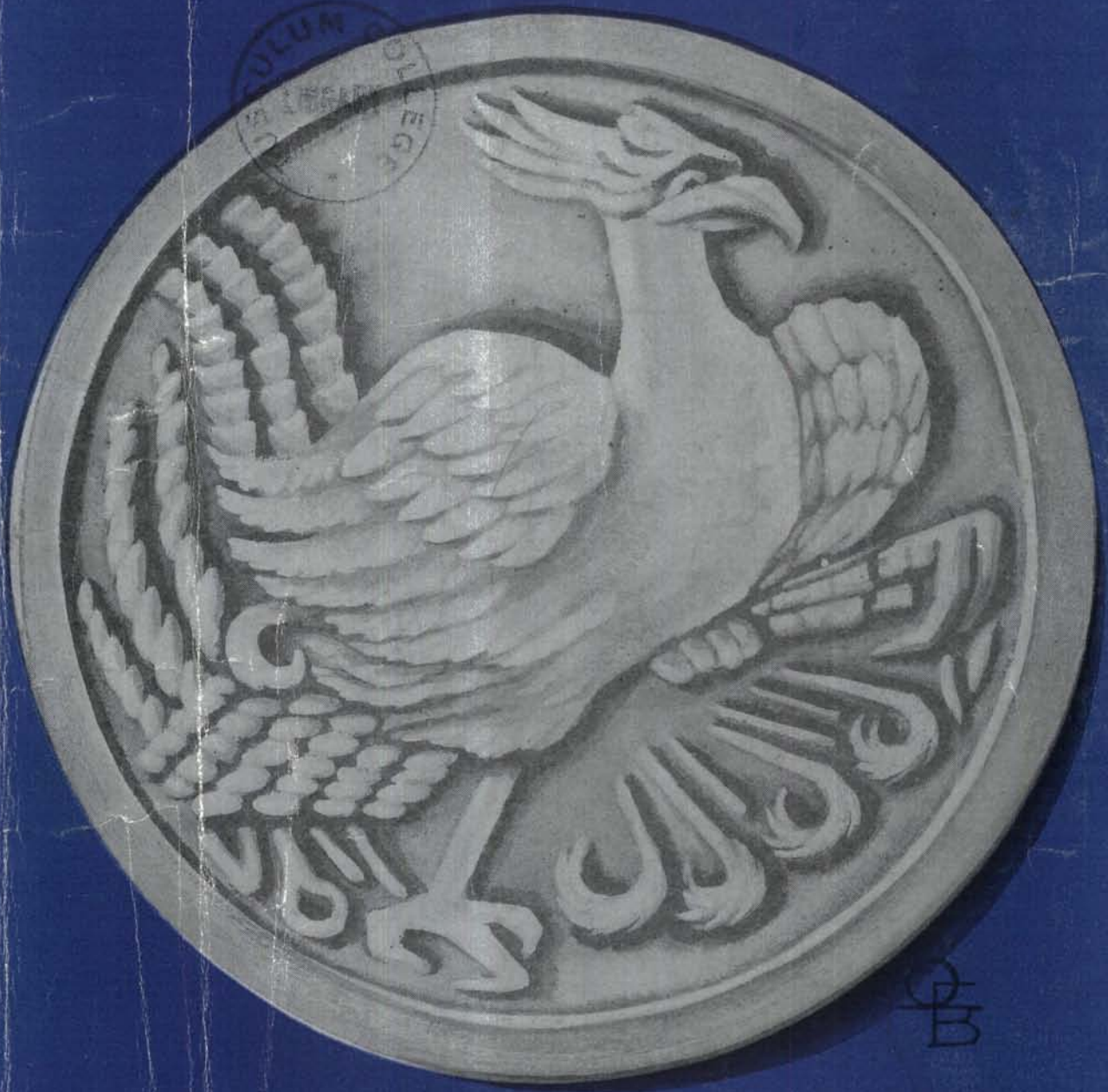
Saturday Review of Literature

Vol. XXXII No. 32 AUGUST 6, 1949 TWENTY CENTS



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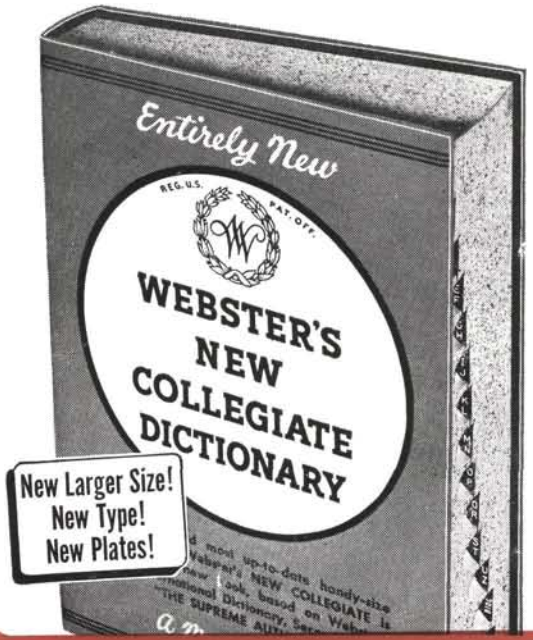

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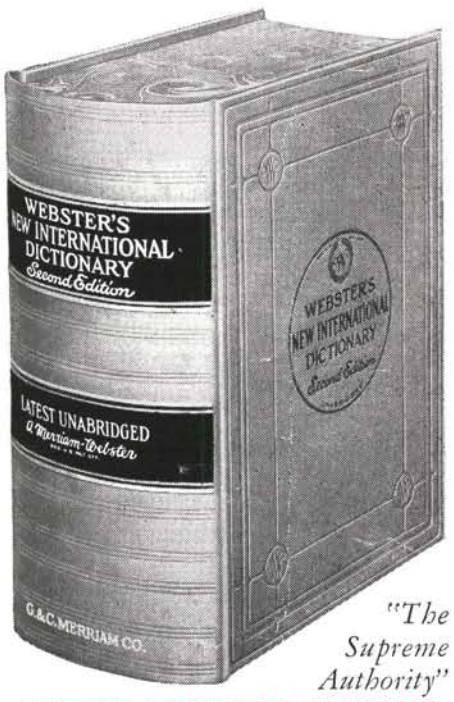

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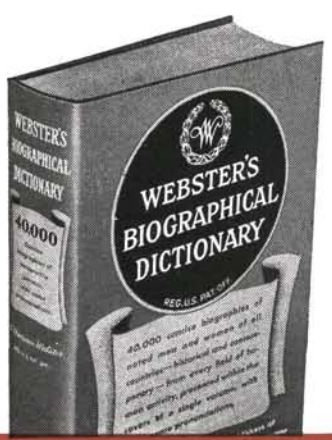

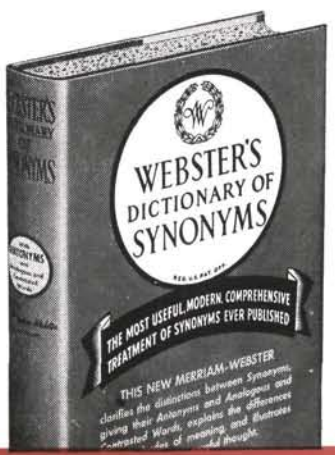
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has been publishing books of lasting value. On these pages are listed a few of the Macmillan authors whose books have appeared in the years since the **Saturday Review of Literature** was founded in 1924--authors whose names appear again on the new Macmillan list for Fall, 1949.

Mary Ellen Chase

1934 Mary Peters
1935 Silas Crockett
1938 Dawn in Lyonesse
1941 Windswept
and others

Watch in October for Miss Chase's first novel since the phenomenally successful (and abidingly cherished) *Windswept*. Called *The Plum Tree*, it mingles comedy and tragedy in the story of one day in an old ladies' home.

C.S. Lewis

1943 Screwtape Letters
1943 Out of the Silent Planet
1946 The Great Divorce
1947 Miracles
and others

"The most eloquent, witty, learned and altogether brilliant champion of the Christian religion now writing" (Orville Prescott) is constantly finding new readers and delighting the old. This fall, *The Weight of Glory and Other Addresses.*

Charles Morgan

1936 Sparkenbroke
1940 The Voyage
1947 The Judge's Story
and others

Morgan's novel, *The River Line* (coming in August), is as subtly felt and finely wrought as his others. Through a keen analysis of character, he offers a philosophical comment on the violences of our times.

Albert Schweitzer

1923 J. S. Bach
1948 The Quest of the Historical Jesus
1948 On the Edge of the Primeval Forest
and others

This fall the first American editions of two Schweitzer classics will come out: *The Philosophy of Civilization* and *Memoirs of Childhood and Youth*. They throw light on the mind and life of one of the most remarkable men of our times.

Gladys Hasty Carroll

1933 As the Earth Turns
1947 While the Angels Sing
and others

In *West of the Hill* (coming in September) Mrs. Carroll writes once again of simple Americans, the salt of the earth, and will prove again her right to such critical terms as "flavorful, satisfying, honest, vigorous."

Marya Zaturenska

1937 Cold Morning Sky
1944 The Golden Mirror
1941 Listening Landscape

A distinguished lyric poet, winner of the Shelley Memorial Award and the Pulitzer Prize, turns to biography. Her forthcoming book *Christina Rossetti*, portrays the interior and exterior drama of a great poet's life.

Arthur Koestler

1941 Darkness at Noon
1945 The Yogi and the Commissar
1946 Thieves in the Night
1949 Insight and Outlook
and others

One of the most vital thinkers and writers of our generation, Koestler discusses developments in Palestine and Israel's role in the future, in *Promise and Fulfilment:* Palestine 1917-1949, to be published in October.

Hans Kohn

1944 The Idea of Nationalism
1946 Prophets and Peoples

Professor Kohn's *The Idea of Nationalism* was hailed as one of the influential books of our time. In *The Twentieth Century: A Mid-Way Account of the Western World* (September) he further analyzes the ideological conflicts of our age.

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Through the years—

The Saturday Review of Literature...

has been a magazine of lasting value, a stimulating influence in the promotion of books and ideas. On the occasion of its twenty-fifth anniversary, **The Macmillan Company** offers warmest congratulations on its past achievements -- and sincerest hopes for a long and equally worth-while future.

Dorothy Whipple

1939 The Priory
1944 They Were Sisters

An English writer with "sentiment, but not sentimentality, and quiet wisdom and understanding" (in Amy Loveman's words), Miss Whipple has been called a modern Jane Austen. Her latest novel of English life, *Because of the Lockwoods*, has just come out.

Vaughan Wilkins

1937 And So—Victoria
1942 Seven Tempest
1944 Being Met Together

Author of best-selling historical novels, Mr. Wilkins now applies his talents to a fast-moving modern tale of love and adventure—one of the gayest, maddest series of escapades ever to attain the dignity of print. Don't miss *Once Upon a Time*, coming in October.

Walter Havighurst

1937 The Quiet Shore
1942 The Long Ships Passing
1946 Land of Promise
and others

The Middle West, especially the Great Lakes region he knows so well, has furnished the subject matter for Havighurst's successful series of books, fiction and non-fiction. His forthcoming novel, *Signature of Time*, is set on an island in Lake Erie.

G.B.Stern

1938 The Ugly Dachshund
1942 The Young Matriarch
1944 Trumpet Voluntary
1948 No Son of Mine
and others

One of England's most distinguished writers, G. B. Stern is a novelist, essayist, humorist. She has poured out her rich personality in a series of autobiographical books, the latest of which—*Benefits Forgot*—will appear shortly.

Sean O'Casey

1934 Within the Gates
1946 Drums Under the Windows
1949 Inishfallen, Fare Thee Well
and others

This fall will see the publication of a new O'Casey play—*Cock-a-doodle Dandy*—and re-issues of the first two volumes of his remarkable autobiography, which have recently been out of print. They are *I Knock at the Door* (1939) and *Pictures in the Hallway* (1942).

Robert Standish

1942 The Three Bamboos
1944 Bonin
1945 The Small General
1947 Mr. On Loong
and others

Mr. Standish's latest novel is a July *Literary Guild* selection. *Elephant Walk* is a tense novel of human passions and of man's struggle against the alien tropics. Superb drama by a master story-teller.

George Peter Murdock

1934 Our Primitive Contemporaries

Mr. Murdock's newest book, recently published, is *Social Structure*. It is a magnificent study of family, kinship organization, sex and marriage in some 250 societies, including our own. It is hailed as a landmark in the social sciences.

Irene D. Paden

1943 The Wake of the Prairie Schooner

Mrs. Paden's new book, coming in November, is a grand successor to *The Wake of the Prairie Schooner*. *Prairie Schooner Detours* tells the dramatic story of pioneers on two illusory and treacherous detours to the gold fields.

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SRL · Twenty-Fifth Anniversary

August 6, 1949

THE ISSUE:

FIRST SECTION: BOOKS

Henry Seidel Canby's *Introductory essay makes the point that American literature so far has failed to live up to its promise at the end of World War II. "Footnotes to 1949"* 17

Clifton Fadiman *says that at some point in the not very remote past a profound shift in our thinking took place that has resulted in "The Decline of Attention"* 20

Howard Mumford Jones *believes that "The American Malady" from which our literature suffers today arises in part from the writer's failure to consider the nature and needs of his readers* 24

Bernard DeVoto *rejoices that out of all the American writing in the last few years "nobody has been able to isolate an official or prevalent view." "Time Without a Theme"* 27

John P. Marquand *leads off the section "Looking Backwards" with a reappraisal of "This Side of Paradise"* 30

Lewis Gannett, *examining Sinclair Lewis's "Main Street" in the light of the present, sees that book, so bitterly attacked in its day, as an "affectionate story"* 31

Francis Hackett, *in another reappraisal, characterizes Ernest Hemingway's "A Farewell to Arms" as expressing the primitive mood of war* 32

John Mason Brown *is even more impressed with Thornton Wilder's "Our Town" today than he was when the play was produced in 1938* 33

Eugene O'Neill, Jr., *rereads Steve Benét's "John Brown's Body" and suggests that the Twenties were a period conducive to serious work* 34

Louis Kronenberger, *contemplating H. L. Mencken, believes he "sinfully abused" his role as a social critic but the role itself was a "culturally needed one." "An Ill-Will Tour of the American Mind"* 38

William Rose Benet *records some of his impressions of poetry during thirty years of reviewing, finds the danger now not propaganda but desiccation* 46

SECOND SECTION: IDEAS

David E. Lilienthal *develops his conviction that the problem is not modern science but man himself. "Machines—With and Without Freedom"* 58

Dixon Wecter *and* **Elmer Davis** *differ on "The Power of Ideas in Our Time." Mr. Wecter regards ideas as "master switches," but Elmer Davis believes that ideas in our time haven't been as important as we had supposed and then adds, "Thank God"* 64, 65

Norman Cousins *writes about the "Protest Generation that became the Violent Generation before it was through." "Confessions of A Universalist"* 74

Harry A. Overstreet, *matching titles with ideas, suggests a modest library of books that helped shape our age. "Books Make the Times"* 82

Howard W. Odum *is interested in "The American Blend"—a combination of regional understanding and national unity* 92

FEATURES AND DEPARTMENTS

Bennett Cerf *does some digging into the newspaper files of August 2, 1924 (*SRL*'s birthday), and comes up with some nostalgic nuggets for his department, Trade Winds* 10

Doug Anderson *provides an impressionistic map of what has been happening to literature since 1924. "One Man's Musings on American Regional Fiction"* 44

Christopher Morley, *the Old Mandarin, offers two pages of "Translations from the Chinese." Drawings by Norkin* 54

The Editorials *include a credo for* SRL *and comparisons of the two postwar world periods, with respect to both literature and ideas* 90

Library of the Quarter *is a checklist of worthy books published since 1924, compiled under the auspices of the American Library Association by the Brooklyn Public Library* 177

THIRD SECTION: THE ARTS

John Mason Brown *reviews recent tragedy on the American stage and contends we need more dramas to "remind us of the worth of man the individual." "American Tragedy"* 124

Robert E. Sherwood *looks back upon his "knee-pants-drama" days and decides he was seeking escape from a pretty sordid time. "Footnote to A Preface"* 130

Iris Barry, *reviewing a quarter century of motion pictures, asks what upsurges of ideas and techniques the present has to parallel the "dewy discovery" of the film as art* 138

James Thrall Soby, *after examining the factors tending to restrict American art to a peripheral importance, argues for a national Secretaryship of the Arts. "Does Our Art Impress Europe?"* 142

Irving Kolodin *sums up the lessons of twenty-five years of recording history as a continuous conflict between the "inseparable re-creative art and the easily superseded reproduction"* 150

Howard Hanson, *optimistic about American musical composition during the past twenty-five years, suggests the possibility of a Golden Age. "Flowering of American Music"* 157

Three Credos—*by a playwright (Maxwell Anderson), a critic (Brooks Atkinson), and a painter (Lyonel Feininger)* 135, 136, 149

SPECIAL SECTION: LITERARY ALBUM

Roger Butterfield *(of "The American Past" fame) collaborates with Roland Gelatt, of* SRL, *in bringing together a special picture-album section covering highlights in American history since 1924. "From Babbitt to the Bomb"* 99

POETRY

Christopher La Farge: *"Prayer for Living and Dying"* 29

Ben Ray Redman: *"De Senectute"* 33

Louise Townsend Nicholl: *"And One Came Running"* 35

Frances Minturn Howard: *"Public Gardens"* 164

Babette Deutsch: *"A Ballade for Reunion"* 180

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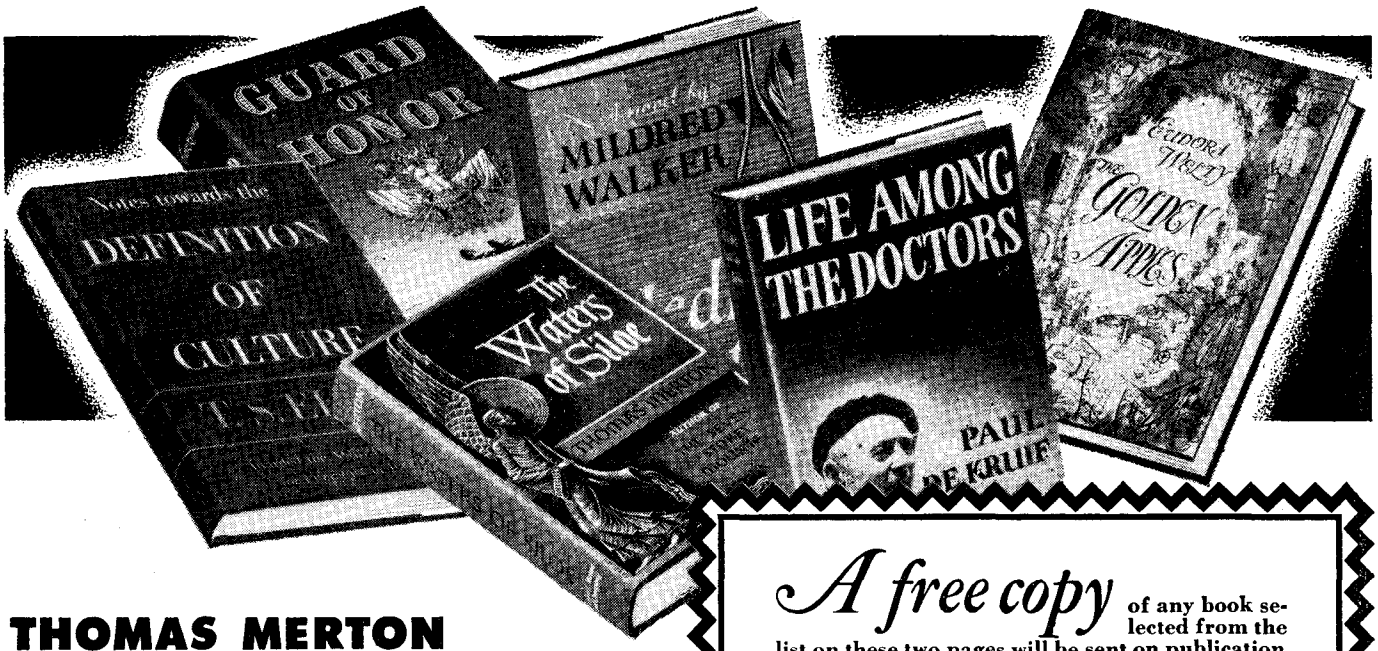

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A free copy **of any book selected from the list on these two pages will be sent on publication to the first twenty-five people who write giving the correct answers to all the following questions. Letters should be addressed to Dept. S., Harcourt, Brace and Company, 383 Madison Ave., New York 17, N. Y.; they must be postmarked not later than August 20th; answers should be numbered to correspond with the numbers of the questions. Please indicate the book you would like to receive free in the event you win. Letters become the property of Harcourt, Brace and Company. Anyone is eligible to enter except the employees, and their families, of the publishers, its advertising agency, and *The Saturday Review of Literature*. Correct answers will appear in the Harcourt, Brace advertisement in this magazine on August 27th.**

1. T. S. Eliot was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1948. What author from the Harcourt, Brace list in 1930 was the first American to receive this prize?
2. James Gould Cozzens wrote the 1949 Pulitzer prize novel. What other author on the above list was a previous Pulitzer prize winner?
3. Of what author mentioned above did E. M. Forster say, "She pushed the light of the English language a little further against darkness?"
4. What current best-seller started the recent controversy about best-seller lists?
5. What philosopher on the above list was praised as a mathematician by Albert Einstein?
6. What famous American man of letters on the above list wrote his first novel at the age of 70, and what was the title?
7. What author on the above list was one of the originators of the "100 Great Books" program?
8. What English author on the above list set a new style in the writing of biography, and with what book?
9. What author on the above list first made medical science a popular subject?
10. What two authors on the above list have created universal themes out of regional material?

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TRADE Winds

AUGUST 2, 1924

Bennett Cerf

THE DATELINE OF Volume One, Number One of the *SRL* reads "August 2, 1924." What other history was made that day? I wandered down to *The New York Times* Annex and delved into the files to find out. Saturday papers in summertime in 1924, as indeed in 1949, were not overburdened with advertising; the issue I examined was thin but well preserved. *The Times* uses good stock.

THE FRONT PAGE. "The London Conference," proclaimed Premier MacDonald happily, "is nearing agreement on major issues." Germany was invited to send delegates to discuss the projected application of the Dawes Plan, and Heidelberg Professor Bonn was moved to declare, "This plan is the one thing that will save Germany." Old military leaders of the Fatherland were not so sure. On this, the tenth anniversary of the outbreak of hostilities in World War I, Field Marshal von Hindenburg rattled his saber and avowed, "I live for the day when the spirit of 1914 again will be the common property of all Germans." Ludendorff and the Crown Prince echoed his sentiments. Their guilt complexes—if any—seemed remarkably well concealed. Nobody asked Adolf Hitler what *he* thought about the Dawes Plan. He was locked away in a prison cell, writing a book called "Mein Kampf." . . . Another headline on August 2, 1924, read "Balkan Skirmishes Cause New Alarm." It appears that Bulgar raiders had swooped across the border of Greek Macedonia. *The Times* correspondent noted, "Authorities say the discord is being stirred up by Soviet Russia." How things have changed in the past quarter century!

The Times was pretty excited about the fact that three Army lieutenants were girdling the entire globe by air. They had left Seattle on April 6 and by August 2 were all the way to Scotland, where, for three days running, fog had prevented their taking off for the next lap of the journey to Iceland. . . . Other newsworthy items on that Saturday twenty-five years ago: Benito Mussolini promised leaders of the opposition in Italy that "their rights would be fully maintained." . . . Prohibition agents raided a socialite's home on East 54th Street, found sixty cases of vintage wines valued at $7,500, and hauled them off to prohibition headquarters at Broadway and 24th Street. . . . John W. Davis, Democratic candidate for President, was conferring with New York's Governor Al Smith. Mayor "Red Mike" Hylan was trying to explain to annoying reporters, in his inimitable English, why Abby Rockefeller had received a suspended sentence on a second offense for speeding. President Coolidge, in Washington, proclaimed a National Defense Day, but assured merchants it would mean "no disruption of business." . . . In Chicago, the Leopold-Loeb trial was nearing a climax. An "alienist" for the defense testified that the slayers had "a dual personality." *The Times* noted that this was the first time an alienist's observations had been admitted as evidence in an Illinois court. . . . Eleven liners, packed to the gunwales, sailed from New York piers. Only one of them—*The Toloa*—is still afloat today.

THE THEATRE. Summer revues dominated the field: the Ziegfeld Follies (with Will Rogers) at the New Amsterdam, George White's Scandals, the Greenwich Village Follies (starring the Dolly Sisters), and the Grand Street Follies at the Neighborhood Playhouse. Eddie Cantor was appearing in "Kid Boots," the Marx Brothers in "I'll Say She Is," Roland Young in "Beggar on Horseback." "Abie's Irish Rose" proudly announced, "Now in its third year." At the Selwyn Theatre, Charlot's Revue featured a couple of promising newcomers named Gertrude Lawrence and Beatrice Lillie. . . .

Movies current on Broadway included Douglas Fairbanks in "The Thief of Bagdad," Gloria Swanson in "Manhandled," Mary Pickford in "Dorothy Vernon of Haddon Hall," Marion Davies in "Janice Meredith," and Valentino in "Monsieur Beaucaire." . . . Jesse Lasky departed for Europe with twenty screen tests for Peter Pan to show J. M. Barrie. . . . *The Times* didn't seem to bother with book news on August 2, 1924, but devoted a column to a Condé Nast shindig in Newport, and ample space to an announcement by Horace Liveright that he meant to turn producer in the fall. His friend Eddie Mayer, he said, had written a wonderful play about Cellini called "The Golden Key," and with the aid of Schwab and Mandel, he meant to bring it to Broadway. He did, too, under the name of "The Firebrand," and the cast included Joseph Schildkraut, Edward G. Robinson, and Frank Morgan. . . .

The radio page really made my eyes pop. *The Times* announced the hourly programs of not only New York stations, but those located in Philadelphia, Providence, Boston, Schenectady, Washington, Buffalo, Pittsburgh, Montreal, Ottawa, Chicago, Kansas City, Dallas, Havana, and Los Angeles! . . . Station WEAF, operating on a wave length of 492, featured an instrumental quintet from the *S. S. President Wilson* from 8:00 to 9:00 and "a program of popular songs" from 9:00 to 10:00 (this was a Saturday evening, mind you). WJZ (455 wave length) gave an hour apiece to the Waldorf orchestra, Vincent de Sola (pianist) and the Kudisch Ensemble. WOR (405 wave length) devoted the entire evening to the Margulies Trio, "with special accordion features by F. Tedesco." . . . Despite the absence of big-time names on these programs, I daresay a case could be made by those who claim radio offered sounder

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During the 25 years since the SRL's first issue, DOUBLEDAY has published a great many books of particular interest to *Saturday Review of Literature* readers. To be published next week is one of the most delightful of these books: THE MUDLARK, a new novel by Theodore Bonnet.

One day during the fourteenth year of Victoria's retirement, an enterprising little London ragamuffin named Wheeler slipped past the guard of Windsor Castle and worked his way to the elaborately appointed dining-room of the Queen. There he was discovered, and taken in charge by the bibulous Mr. Brown, Scottish retainer to the late-lamented Albert. Both Disraeli's statecraft and Victoria's imperious will boggled at the situation, and before Wheeler got out of trouble, Disraeli had bought the Suez Canal; Victoria had come out of retirement; and Emily Prior, one of the Queen's loveliest ladies-in-waiting, was married to a Grenadier Guard.

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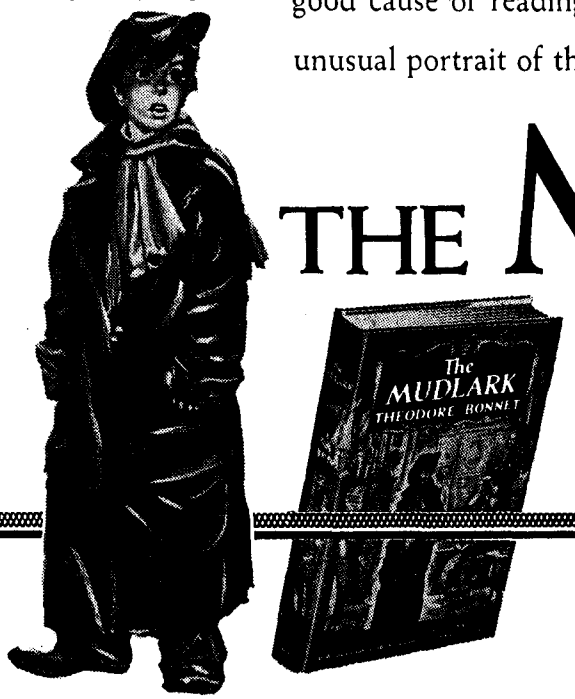

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a novel by

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Our 20th

or our 26th? Take your pick!

Anniversary

In 1923—a year before the first issue of SRL appeared—Franklin Spier started business as Publishers' Advertising Counsel.

In 1929 we became Franklin Spier, Incorporated.

In 1949, we are still producing advertising for America's leading publishers. Our relationship with many of them spans two decades. We are proud not only of the many "big" books that we have helped to best-sellerdom in that period, but of the many others which made an impact on the literature and on the social currents of our times, for which we helped to find the right readers.

16 of the advertisements in this issue were prepared by

Franklin Spier, Inc.

40 East 49th Street
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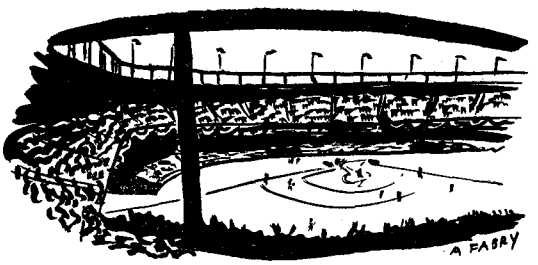
fare in summer 1924, than it does in summer 1949. . . .

THE SPORTS PAGES. Helen Wills, aged eighteen, returned in triumph with the Olympic tennis championship and allowed as how she wouldn't mind taking on Mlle. Lenglen "under the proper conditions." National men's singles champion Bill Tilden was busy winning a tournament in Southern California, but sent Miss Wills a congratulatory wire to the boat. . . . Leo Diegel won the Canadian golf open, with 285 strokes for four rounds; Gene Sarazen was second with 287. The top pros today have shaved approximately a dozen strokes from such scores in championship golf tourneys, not because they're any better players, but because their equipment is better, and the ball is livelier. (Even American News vice prexy Harold Williams made a 261 this year, but that, of course, was for eighteen holes.) . . . Mickey Walker signed to defend his world's welterweight title against Benny Leonard at the Yankee Stadium. . . . The New York Giants, on the high road to their fourth consecutive National League pennant, were seven full games ahead of the second-place Chicago Cubs. The great John McGraw was their manager, and the line-up included Southworth in right field, "Irish" Meusel in left, Frisch at second, Jackson at short, Heinie Groh at third, and "High Pockets" Kelly at first. Virgie Barnes had pitched the game on August 1, handcuffing the Pirates, 3-1. Over at Ebbets Field the upcoming Dodgers (destined to finish only a game and a half behind the Giants) blanked the Cubs, 4-0, with Dazzy Vance allowing only three hits and fanning fourteen. Other stars of that Dodger team were Zack Wheat and Jacques Fournier. . . .

In the American League the Yanks, winners in 1921, 1922, and 1923, were first again, but breathing hard. The Washington Senators were on their heels and, in fact, nosed them out at the final wire. Babe Ruth was already a Yankee, but his days of real glory still lay ahead. Other Yanks included Bob Meusel, Pipp, Schang, and "Jumping Joe" Dugan. A promising youngster named Lou Gehrig was ticketed as "a strong candidate for the regular first base job in the near future." . . . The Senators' victory in 1924 was a popular one all over the country, even in New York, for it gave Walter Johnson, the "Big Train," in the twilight of his career, a chance to pitch in a World Series for the first time. A loser in his first two appearances, he concluded the series in a blaze of glory by winning the seventh and deciding game, 4 to 3, in 12 innings. The hit that won the game (dyed-in-the-wool fans will never forget it) was a simple grounder from the bat of McNeely that hit a pebble at the last second and bounced crazily over third-baseman Freddie Lindstrom's head, scoring Muddy Ruel, who had doubled, from second base. . . .



BUT BACK TO AUGUST 2, 1924! *The New York Post* advertised "The Uncensored Story of Russia Since Lenine" (that's how they spelled it), "written from Berlin, free of Russian censorship," by Seymour B. Conger. The department-store displays featured "cloche" hats and dresses without waistlines that looked like Gold Medal flour bags. Mink coats ranged from a thousand dollars to twelve hundred. and Maxwell had a new open car priced at $895. . . . The stock market was doing just fine. "Uptrend unbroken" was the *Times's* happy tidings, with General Electric hitting an all-time high at 263. The prices of other leaders also look peculiar in light of subsequent events (though some doubled and trebled before the debacle five years later). Baldwin Locomotive sold at 122, U. S. Steel at 107, New York Central also at 107, and Baltimore & Ohio at 64. General Motors, on the other hand, was 14⅝ and Superior Oil 8. Sterling was quoted at 4.41, francs at 5.14. Cotton was 29¢, and wheat $1.30. And, oh yes, there was a serious freight-car shortage, and commuters on the Long Island Railroad were kicking about the antiquated equipment (a great deal of which is twenty-five years more antique today).

As for what the ambitious editors of the brand-new *SRL* were up to on August 2, 1924 (a sunny day, with low humidity, and a maximum temperature at 75), I am sure the other pages of this anniversary issue will carry full details. I hope all of you will join me in congratulating them for a job well done, and hoping they'll do even better in the twenty-five years to come.

—Bennett Cerf.

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RINEHART & COMPANY

congratulates SRL's editors

on having waged a consistent fight, these past 25 years, for civilized values in a muddled world . . .

and invites SRL's readers

to send for a free copy of our 20th Anniversary Catalogue . . .

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A PREVIEW
of some of the fall's highlights

The thirty-ninth and fortieth volumes in the *Rivers of America* Series will be along in October and November, respectively . . . THE OHIO, by R. E. Banta, and THE POTOMAC, by Frederick Gutheim. They will, unquestionably, be among the most important of the mighty series that was inaugurated twelve years ago by the late Constance Lindsay Skinner, and carried on after her death by Editors Hervey Allen and Carl Carmer.

Leo W. Schwarz has spent a lifetime gathering together the rich cultural lore of the Jews, as evidenced by such memorable anthologies as his *Golden Treasury of Jewish Literature* and *The Jewish Caravan*. During the time that Mr. Schwarz was director of D. P. operations in Germany in 1946 and 1947 he gathered manuscripts, diaries and memoirs telling of the extraordinary experiences of Europe's displaced persons. THE ROOT AND THE BOUGH, coming in October, will be one of the great human documents of our time.

Feeling in the mood for a little humor? Will Cuppy's HOW TO ATTRACT THE WOMBAT (coming in November) will fill the bill, and—strange as it may seem—may even teach you something about the animal world, including yourself . . . Another hilarious book dealing with two-legged and four-legged fauna is THE PIG IN THE PARLOR, written by the family of the versatile Walter Karig and profusely (if unprofessionally) illustrated by same. This one will be along in October.

Did you know that malaria—not heart disease or cancer—is the all-time top killer? At least three hundred million people suffer every year from malaria, and no less than three million of them die of it. MALARIA: THE BIOGRAPHY OF A KILLER, by Leon J. Warshaw, M. D., discloses these facts and sets forth for the general reader the remarkable discoveries science has made to check this enemy. (October.)

Rinehart is happy to welcome to its list Margaret Kennedy, author of the celebrated *The Constant Nymph*. THE FEAST is a highly dramatic story you will not want to miss . . . Victoria Lincoln's first novel since *February Hill* is also on this Fall's list; and we have a newcomer who may well cause a sensation with her first book. She is Mona Kent, and her novel, MIRROR, MIRROR ON THE WALL, does for the radio soap-opera racket what *The Hucksters* did for another segment of that industry. (September.)

Do you like good music—and yet wonder why "classical" music sometimes makes you long for the moment when you can get out to the bar? You'll probably find the key you are looking for in THE GOOD HOUSEKEEPING GUIDE TO MUSICAL ENJOYMENT, by George R. Marek, coming in September.

Some of the other notable Rinehart books of the Fall are a monumental ENCYCLOPEDIA OF MODERN WORLD POLITICS, by Walter Theimer; ART AND LIFE IN AMERICA, by Oliver W. Larkin—a word-and-picture panorama of the achievements of America's painters, sculptors, and handicrafters from Colonial times to the present—but there isn't room to tell you about them. So send for that catalogue!

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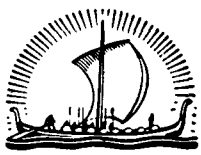
THE VIKING PRESS is proud to take the occasion of SRL's 25th ANNIVERSARY to make the first public announcement of the most important single publication in its own quarter-century history



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"He has done a *Don Quixote* that comes as close as a translation can to re-creation. It is clearly a labor of love as well as understanding . . . a labor of genuine dedication . . . of slow savorings of the qualities of Cervantes' tale that have made it immortal . . . a translation that is equal to the richness and varied change of pace of the original, from high-flown parody to homely folk wisdom, from contrived grandiloquence to gentle poetry, from physical farce to deeply human comedy that is sometimes near to tears . . ."

—BERTRAM D. WOLFE

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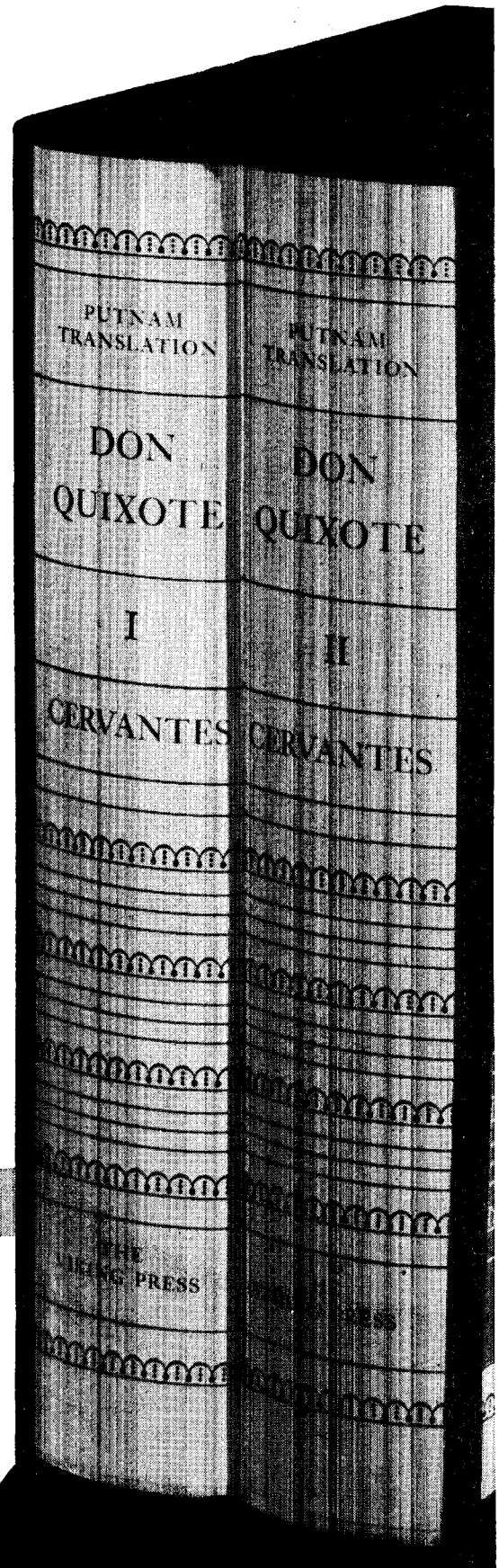
FOR MORE THAN TEN generations, readers of English have had to take on faith the verdict that *Don Quixote* is "the world's greatest novel." A phenomenal best-seller throughout the world, it has been translated into more languages than any other work except the Bible, yet it has never been adequately translated into English. Existing versions are generally considered to be inaccurate, obsolete or uninspired.

✦ Now American readers can know at last the story's greatness. Samuel Putnam's new translation "comes as close as a translation can to re-creation" and to preserving the qualities which have made the tale immortal. For the first time we can ride with Don Quixote on his weary Rocinante, with Sancho Panza on his donkey—ride with them in full appreciation of their adventures and their discourse. Now we can read their epic with the same leisurely and rewarding pleasure with which it has been read and re-read for centuries in other languages.

✦ *The Putnam Translation* is the complete work: both Parts I and II. Many readers, familiar with only the popular editions, are hardly aware there is a Part II, in some ways the most engrossing portion of the novel. To the entire work Mr. Putnam has brought "the love and reverence that are due so great and lovable a writer." Mr. Putnam saw his task as "the result of one man's—a translator's—prolonged communings with one of the fine, rare spirits of our 'usable past.' "



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"No playwright ever has made or ever will make a character that will follow us out of the theatre as Don Quixote follows us out of the book."
—WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

"...the supreme form of fiction..."
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THERE is something very satisfying about looking back over a span of time—not just a year or two, but a whole lot of years. And thinking about the SRL, with its quarter century behind it, has put us also into a kindly and retrospective mood. We have no intention of going back over all our years to 1866 when Henry Holt and Company was founded, but a sidewise glance at the not-too-distant past, the recent past, and the near future seems not out of place.

Who shall say for sure what books will live, when time has winnowed the chaff away? And who shall be the really astute one to put his Midas finger on them in advance? Just as the publication of a single book is the work of many minds and of many hands, the building of a publisher's long-term list is the work of more minds and hands than we like to think of—all at once.

The above reflection was prompted by a very thoughtful letter which we have just received from Miss Cleora Forth, thanking us for bringing back into print Helen Waddell's beautiful English translation of MEDIAEVAL LATIN LYRICS ($5.00). Miss Forth is the sort of person who buys books today that she will be equally happy to read twenty years from now. Because we operate in the belief that there are many people like Miss Forth, we shall very shortly be having back in print Miss Waddell's THE WANDERING SCHOLARS ($5.00).

It was perhaps this facet of our nature that led us recently to reissue Albert Schweitzer's inspiring autobiography, OUT OF MY LIFE AND THOUGHT ($3.50), first published by Holt in 1933. It has been brought up to date with a postscript by Everett Skillings and has been completely redesigned and reset.

Robert Frost has been with us since the publication of his first book in 1915. It was therefore more than a pleasure a couple of months ago to bring together the contents of ten of his books, plus some new poems, in a volume entitled COMPLETE POEMS OF ROBERT FROST, 1949 ($6.00). Readers liked the form the book took, and reviewers wrote in warm admiration of America's greatest living poet.

Three other of our recent books have established themselves. GAMESMANSHIP: THE ART OF WINNING GAMES WITHOUT ACTUALLY CHEATING by Stephen Potter ($2.50) has found its place as a minor classic in its own field. It has added to the zest of living and of games, and has contributed several new words to the language. . . . THANK GOD FOR MY HEART ATTACK ($2.50) by Charles Yale Harrison, distinguished author of GENERALS DIE IN BED and NOBODY'S FOOL, has been acclaimed as a boon for cardiac sufferers by laymen and doctors alike. . . . Audie Murphy's TO HELL AND BACK ($3.00) was recognized as "one of the most arresting literary products of World War II."*

Back in 1929 we published STEPPENWOLF by Hermann Hesse, who has since been awarded the Nobel Prize. This brings us to some of the items on our fall list. We shall be doing in the autumn Hesse's most recent—and according to many, his greatest—novel, MAGISTER LUDI ($5.00). . . . Another volume of great interest is THE AMERICAS: THE SEARCH FOR HEMISPHERE SECURITY ($3.00), the book about Latin America and our Good Neighbor policy that Laurence Duggan had nearly completed before his untimely death. . . . Lancelot Law Whyte, who has been called "one of the most scientifically informed and philosophically constructive minds in the contemporary world,"** is planning a lecture tour in the United States to coincide with the publication of THE UNITARY PRINCIPLE IN BIOLOGY AND PHYSICS ($3.50). His EVERYMAN LOOKS FORWARD and THE NEXT DEVELOPMENT IN MAN will be remembered from last year's list. . . . We shall be publishing, too, a revised edition of a classic in political science, THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF MODERN GOVERNMENT by Herman Finer ($7.50). . . . And finally, DESERT CALLING ($4.00), Anne Fremantle's sensitive biography of Charles de Foucauld, French aristocrat and Army officer who became a Trappist and later a hermit-priest.

As we said at the beginning, building a long-term list is always the work of much time and many hands. And this puts us in mind of a stanza in one of the new Frost poems:

"How often is the case
I thus pay men a debt
For having left a place
And still do not forget
To pay them some sweet share
*For having once been there"****

AT ALL BOOKSTORES
HENRY HOLT & COMPANY

* CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR
** F. S. C. NORTHROP
*** COMPLETE POEMS OF ROBERT FROST, 1949, p. 577. Copyright by Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1949.

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FOOTNOTES to 1949

HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

FIVE years ago, at the time of the Twentieth Anniversary of *The Saturday Review of Literature*, it seemed possible to see on the horizon, if dimly, the end of war and that relative tranquillity in which new literatures begin to form. It seemed not foolish to predict another 1920 in American literature, in which reservoirs of imagination began to burst their banks and flow into the Word, which is mankind's best record of the past. The prediction has not been fulfilled. Our education by violence has not been completed. Perhaps it has only begun.

For this Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the *SRL*, a reader and critic had better be chary of prophecies and stick to present facts. And these definable facts are very likely to be found in fiction, which, if not always or often the best of literature, is certainly the most indicative of popular taste and the quality of popular imagination. By "popular" I do not mean the imagination of the masses, which reflects unconsciously the imagination of the past more clearly than it reacts to the basic realities of the present. I mean the community of the so-called educated, which includes the readers of the *SRL*, and those who write for it. Here the visibility of history has some distance, and there is at least enough intellectual objectivity to escape from the merely personal impression. I mean what hopeful publishers call the audience of intelligent readers —and are sometimes astonished by its numbers, and sometimes dismayed by the limits of its intelligence. Upon this community it may be said that poetry since the war has made no clear and vital impact; nor has the stage. But the novel, which has swallowed the essay and the satire, and now begins to regurgitate in half-digested gobbets, and has fed well but not often wisely on science, and has made philosophy its publicity man and journalism its technical adviser—the novel has certainly been widely discussed and widely read. Yet in these years when realism knows no limits except the law courts and satiety, this community of the intelligent often reserves its enthusiastic reading for new kinds of romance and sentiment, well written and well constructed even though the contents may be as stale as suburban architecture.

In the pages that follow, many eminent critics and interpreters will set down their answers to the old queries—"Tell me what you read, and I'll tell you why you like (or dislike) it" and "Show me what you write, and I'll tell you why you wrote it." But the writer of this preface has the privilege of a toastmaster whose guests need no introduction. Five years of reading in novels read by if not always popular with the intelligent reader has increased his respect for the energy of American writing, yet sharpened his feeling that too many books—and especially novels—ask too much for what they give. He has grievances, and proposes to editorialize them before his colleagues say their say. Everything in the remarks that follow has a definite reference to living writers, and is meant to be personal as well as general.

VULGARITY. This is the most disturbing of current trends in writing. By vulgarity I do not mean the sexual, or indecency, or the rough and tough called the hard-boiled today, all of which are relative to the mores of their times. Or the bawdy, which is an absolute and of which most hearty readers approve. Or the obscene, which is also a definable absolute and has a purpose the direct opposite of the literary. Nor do I mean the taste and expression of the common people, which is what the Romans meant by the term. Jane Austen referred to the vulgar in my sense when she spoke of indelicacy, although the acts and words she called indelicate we may call normal. Henry James meant what I mean when he used the word vulgar, one of his few entirely condemnatory adjectives. Vulgarity is a quality of the mind. It is a baseness of the spirit. "Be thou familiar; but by no means vulgar," Shakespeare finely wrote, and though it was a precept for his gentlemen, he stuck to it himself even with his bawdy clowns. By 1643 it was used of the mean, the coarsely commonplace. And I need only to add "writers" to Coleridge's "the sordid vulgarity of the leaders of the day" to express one of my grievances exactly.

Among the "sordid leaders" who are finally responsible for our movie and radio scripts vulgarity is commercial. It is the tawdry touch that

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smears the screen or the air with a coarse commonplaceness, the insincerity of which is obvious even to the unsophisticated. Even the honest *vulgaritas*—the common people—squirm a little under too much of this dishonest vulgarity. They can be fooled by insincerity, but not too often. Actually these highly paid corrupters of scenes and episodes are patronizing their public. They find less sales resistance to the base, the mean, the coarsely commonplace. These are fundamentals of human nature. But such writers and their employers do not so much exhibit these common traits as exploit them. The true vulgarity is in their own sordid and tawdry minds.

Vulgarity in the current novel is different, since the appeal is to the really literate, and scenes are more likely to be overspiced than made commonplace. The vulgar novelist is not insincere, nor, to be fair to him, sordid. I do not believe in the common theory that realistic novels are made smutty in order to sell. The proof is that they do not sell widely if that is their only merit. The vulgarity in these books is not in the plot and incidents but in the minds of the authors.

Some time ago a rash of novels broke out upon publishers' lists which were widely acclaimed for skill and novelty. These books were touted as satires and as such they had considerable merit. The schools and newspapers had made society word-minded, and the result was a new and very profitable Grub Street stretching from Hollywood to New York, with branches in every metropolis. Its new professions were made up of middlemen, educated as far as a B.A. goes, who in effect bought words and sold them to the public. Their practitioners made or handled movie scenarios and radio scripts, advertising, the publishing of certain kinds of books and editing of certain types of magazines. The work was lucrative and where money comes easily the opportunities for satire and pointed description are never far behind. For every new occupation gives human nature new ways of being absurd or comic or tragic. The material for satire, especially in New York and Hollywood, was rich and ripe.

THE novelists to whom I refer fell upon these new subjects for fiction and made scenes or whole books of them. The novels were weak in character, for character did not flourish among these mongers of words—but

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of LITERATURE
EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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Good and Bad Reviewing

After the War
By EDWIN ARLINGTON ROBINSON

Timely and Timeless
By THE EDITOR

This Week

Next Week, and Later

SRL's first issue, Aug. 2, 1924, was launched with a controversy over "art for art's sake" that is still being debated in these pages.

the writers found plenty of shallow, vain, lascivious people devoid of self-knowledge, such as have always provided ammunition for the writer. The actors in the rather base plots of these novels were too personal to have been invented. Indeed those "in the know" could always call them by their real names. There was no attempt to be fair in the representation of this word-mongering society, and indeed satire is seldom fair. What was more serious, there was no attempt to see steadily and see whole these new types of human nature misbehaving themselves. And the fact that the quotation is from that supposedly outdated moralist Matthew Arnold, does not alter its importance for the writer of a novel. Indeed, the books seemed limited to the writers' personal experiences, never fully understood even by themselves. They were certainly "familiar," and with good reason. "Vulgar" it was not necessary to be.

And vulgar these novels were. There was nothing necessarily vulgar about the moral sickness infecting the characters in the books who intrigued from bed to bed and contract to contract. They were more tragic than comic for their capers gave them no happiness, however they might amuse or appal the reader. Yet the edge of the satire was blunted because it became evident to the reader that the novelists had no real understanding of what was wrong with this world. Indeed, by the end of the book it was the reader not the writer who had become the satirist. He had observed that the novelist was spiritually and mentally one of the gang he professed to satirize, and in the last chapters had stepped down and become one of his own characters. Here was an irruption of—"base" is too harsh a word—commonplace minds, whose eyes were far better than their imaginations, into leadership of great possible influence.

The more successful of these books which I have chosen as examples of a tendency were violently attacked by individuals and organizations as indecent and cynical and as propaganda for a disintegrated morality. Perhaps, but I think that it was the essential vulgarity that shocked the public. There is nothing cynical, indecent, or immoral in describing cheating or sexuality. Falstaff was a cheat and a grafter, the wife of Bath was lewd, but both have a permanent place in literature. They are lewd but never vulgar. Vulgarity is in the mind that sees these traits without frames of wider reference. The vulgar man is obsessed by the baseness of spirit which he tries to satirize.

I may be, and I hope I am, unfair to many brilliant writers among these novelists of the word mongers. Perhaps I might have found better illustrations of vulgarity elsewhere. But I am not unfair to a prevailing tendency. Anyone who reduces the complexities of personality to rather smelly and commonplace matter is (as yet) unfit to be a novelist, no matter how good he may be as a spot reporter. A high degree of consciousness of life is important for a good character (as James remarks) and is certainly a requisite for a novelist who goes beyond the reporting of personal experience. This the vulgar, like the insensitive, mind can never possess. And high consciousness of life is dependent upon a discovery of some real or created moral organization in the world.

WAR, JOURNALISM, AND ART. Let us consider the war novel, which has proliferated until it has become a genre—perhaps the most noticeable development in fiction at the end of our twenty-five-year period. But are these books novels—or are they journalism—or does it matter? I believe that it does. Defoe was our first journalist who succeeded in writing litera-

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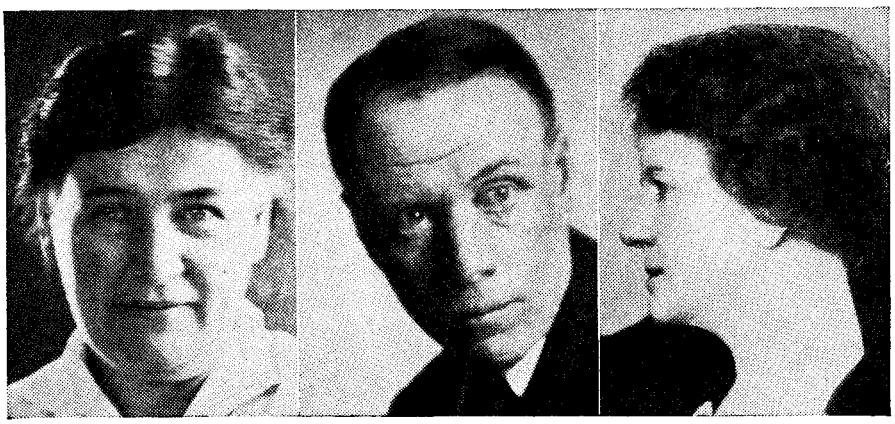
ture. He had a sense for a story as a whole which few spot journalists possess. He had that admirable narrative style which comes from the selection of the right incidents and the right words. John Hersey's "Hiroshima" is the only American achievement in our day to be compared with his. And the subjects of his two best books were panoramic for their times, the white man's first contact with primitive man in primitive conditions and the effect of a new world upon the maladjusted and the oppressed. Kipling, before our period, gave fiction a much needed blood transfusion as our young war novelists are doing today. But it was often the wrong blood and his topical and timely stories are already dying of the disease of journalism, which is overemphasis. H. G. Wells wrote his novels as journalism, and knew it, and prophesied that they would do their job, and die, and was right. Even his prophetic fantasies are geared to scientific intuition rather than to human nature, and already time is dating and will probably destroy them.



—*Steichen.* —*Robert H. Davis.*

"What has happened to the successors of Willa Cather, Sinclair Lewis (of 'Babbitt'), and Ellen Glasgow?"

THE novelists of this war, especially the Americans, are most of them young and most of them trained in journalism, either as magazine writers or as devoted readers of war correspondence. They differ from earlier writers of war fiction in that most of them were actual soldiers or sailors in combat conditions. They are not, most of them, merely correspondents, or novelists who, like Stendhal or Thackeray or Tolstoy, use war as a background of their real theme. An immense and sudden experience brought their faculty of expression to life in the midst of boredom, sodden misery, and excessive danger. They had every reason to feel that they were witnessing mankind under its greatest stresses. Like scientists seeing a volcano in operation, they felt that here was an unexampled opportunity. Hence, as with these scientists, and like journalists, every incident seemed of almost equal potential importance. They were seeing life steadily sure enough—but they were emphatically not seeing it whole, and this they were too young to realize.

For war is an abnormal experience in humanity and always has been, even in the most fighting of ages. Even the American Indians fought only in warm weather, and while they were fighting became specialized beasts of the chase. In war there is no family life, the relations of men and women are reduced to sheer sex, and the ordinary business of community living, in which nearly all of the situations which interest a good novelist occur, gives place to an ersatz existence made up of abnormal stimulations or a paralysis of everything except endurance.

War in its idealized form has made good poetry, good romance, good adventure, but not often good novels. The same is true of the mystery or detective story, which is a kind of domestic war story. Our new genre of American fiction, in spite of a few brilliant exceptions, is monotonous. It has the monotony of news repeated in slightly variant forms in the papers or over the radio. These novels, if one reads many of them, blend in one long tragic strip with comic interludes. There are the same types of character under the same pressure, the same incidents, the same method of telling, the same organization not as a story but as a chronicle of event after event. Three or four men of talent could have interviewed most of these eyewitnesses and produced two or three books that would have stood for the whole experience. Nothing would be easier than to parody these war novels, if they were not too grim for parody. "The Naked and the Dead" is an exception, but until the author of that fine book passes beyond his obsession with the abnormal experience and begins to study its effects, his chapters could be slid in and out of a score of similar war novels without registering much difference.

Perhaps this is the only way to write realistically about war as an immediate, all-absorbing, firsthand experience. Certainly this war journalism—for that is what these novels really are—is more impressive and more informing than any earlier war reporting. My point is that these able young men, if they are to become as good in the novel as they are in journalism, must develop an art capable of handling the far subtler and more varied situations which human nature develops in peace. They will need the skill in sustained narrative of a Defoe or of a Herodotus (who shows traits of an obsession with the abnormal), the vision of a Balzac, and a skill in selection and construction for a long story which is a necessity for good novel writing, though not for journalism. Energy, descriptive power, and the trial-and-error method of blurting it all out, are not enough. For long-distance shooting it is the rifle not the shotgun that does the job.

How Not to Write a Novel. I have sat down monthly for almost the life of this *Review* with a small but experienced group to discuss the merits of current books among which novels were numerous. And we have all noticed in recent years that our criticism tends to begin and often to end with one unsubtle and blanket statement—"It ought to be cut." I do not refer to great novels (few come along)

(*Continued on page* 175)

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1. The Decline of Attention

CLIFTON FADIMAN

Clifton Fadiman

ALMOST fifty years ago Henry James, a novelist desperately in search of an audience, isolated, in the course of a letter of December 11, 1902, to William Dean Howells, one reason for commercial failure. He wrote (*italics his*): "The *faculty of attention* has utterly vanished from the general anglo-saxon mind, extinguished at its source by the big, blatant Bayadère of Journalism, of the newspaper and the *picture* (above all) magazine; who keeps screaming, 'Look at *me*, I am the thing, and I only, the thing that will keep you in relation with me *all the time* without your having to attend *one minute* of the time.' . . . Illustrations, loud simplifications and *grossissements*, . . . the prose that is careful to be in the tone of, and with the distinction of a newspaper or bill-poster advertisement—these, and these only, meseems, 'stand a chance'."

The first thing that strikes one about this pronouncement is its extraordinary accuracy if considered as prophecy. All the evils of which poor James complained would seem to have intensified since his day. Yet James did not think of himself as prophetic; apparently the decline of attention in the reading public was already, in 1902, a salient phenomenon.

Let us move back another hundred years. We find Wordsworth writing, in the preface to the 1802 edition of the "Lyrical Ballads": "For a multitude of causes unknown to former times are now acting with a combined force to blunt the discriminating powers of the mind, and, unfitting it for all voluntary exertion, to reduce it to a state of almost savage torpor. The most effective of these causes are the great national events which are daily taking place, and the increasing accumulation of men in cities, where the uniformity of their occupations produces a craving for extraordinary incident which the rapid communication of intelligence hourly gratifies."

It is interesting to note, first, that the decline of attention had been clearly spotted as far back as 1802; and, second, that some of its causes—nationalism and industrialism—were more philosophically identified in that early era than in James's time. What James took to be the sources of the decline of attention—the blatancies of journalism and particularly of pictorial journalism—are really secondary effects or symptoms. At most they lend a helping hand; they are aids to inattention.

Let us be clear as to what we mean by attention. The faculty of attention itself cannot disappear. But it may be paralyzed by various pressures: the pressure of the German torture chamber, of the Kremlin propaganda mill, of the sensational journalism of James's complaint. It may also be displaced as to its objects; that is, attention may be unwilling or unable to fasten on the matters James cared for—the world of art and thought—and quite willing and able to fasten on a quite different set of objects: the mechanisms of industrial production, of a baseball game, of war.

It seems fairly clear that in our time the attrition of one kind of attention—the ability to read prose and poetry of meaning and substance—is becoming more and more widespread; and that the faculty of attention in general is undergoing a wholesale displacement away from ideas and abstractions toward things and techniques. The movement toward displacement is the result of calculated policy in such police states as the Soviet Union. It is a natural phenomenon, by no means universal, in free countries such as our own. The final consequence of both the paralysis and the displacement may be glimpsed in the pages of those Utopias which begin with "Erewhon," continue with "Brave New World," and culminate in a crescendo of horror in George Orwell's "Nineteen Eighty-four."

I use the word horror, but I use it improperly because subjectively. When reflecting on these Utopias, it is important to remember that they were conceived by literary men, that is, by men belonging to the class most gravely menaced by the paralysis and displacement of attention. Such men—Wordsworth, James—are naturally the first to notice the phenomenon from which they have most to fear. But there is a larger class—technicians, generals, Mr. Burnham's admired "managers," certain kinds of journalists, certain kinds of government and labor bureaucrats—which has much to gain from the same phenomenon; and there is a very large class indeed which simply feels more comfortable in a society that does not demand from it any considerable systematic effort of the mind.

Here is Cyril Connolly in a recent number of *Horizon*:

> The great artists of the past, despite the love lavished on them by scholars and esthetes, are becoming more and more remote and unfamiliar. They are not replaced by others because we are moving into a world of non-art. One has only to compare the world of the long sea voyage: sunsets—leisure—complete works of so-and-so—with the still mildly esthetic world of the train and then with the completely incurious existence of the air-passenger with his few reassuring leaflets issued by the company, his meals wrapped up in cellophane in a cardboard box, his copy of *Time* in case the sleeping pill doesn't work. This unseeing, unreading traveler is a

—National Portrait Gallery. —Willard.

Samuel Butler, Aldous Huxley, and George Orwell: The Utopias of Samuel Butler and Aldous Huxley "culminate in a crescendo of horror" in George Orwell's new book.

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symbol of the new public. Poetry for this civilization may well cease to exist, for no one except a few professors will possess the necessary ear to follow its subtleties. Reading aloud is almost extinct and the poet who wrestles with his subtle tone-effects secures his victories for himself alone. The hopeless are the irresponsible, the irresponsible are the lazy: we must accustom ourselves to a reading public which is both too slothful and too restless to read until a sense of values is restored to it.

But what meaning would this tirade hold for a publisher of comic books or a seller of big-magazine advertising space: men who are quite as good citizens as is Mr. Connolly and possess souls quite as immortal as his? To them all the things of which Mr. Connolly complains seem good, not bad; inability to read poetry is for them a sign of decency and inner happiness. No cheap irony is here intended; I wish merely to suggest that the decline in the ability to read is distressing only from a certain traditional—indeed, one might say reactionary—point of view. In larger perspective it may seem merely an inevitable change in man's mental outlook as he moves into a new phase of culture—or anti-culture. The poet will view this change differently from the anthropologist, who will view it differently from the grand masters of pictorial journalism, who will view it differently from the straphanging reader of a tabloid newspaper.

LET us try, then; to consider the decline of attention, not as lobbyists for the mind, but as objectively as possible.

The first thing to make clear is that excellent books are being consistently produced and eagerly read. The question to ask, however, is this: do such books, read by a minority, make a connection with the *center* of our culture in the same sense that the latest issue of a picture-magazine or the latest product from Hollywood *does* make such a connection? Our anthropologist would be forced to answer in the negative. I think he would have to admit that the success of such a book as Toynbee's "A Study of History," is an eccentric rather than a normal phenomenon.

I believe, furthermore, examination would reveal that such books are the consolation of the few (still fairly numerous—possibly a million in all) whose faculty of attention has been neither paralyzed nor displaced, but who fearfully sense such paralysis and displacement all about them. Quite literally such books give aid and comfort to the enemy—that is, the enemy of "progress," of the probable future. The cults of Faulkner, James, Eliot, Kafka; the excitement over the often

—Jean Marie Marcel. —Walter Bird. —Angus McBean.

Graham Greene, I. Compton-Burnett, and Elizabeth Bowen—"writers who are not ashamed, nay, are proud, to make stiff demands on the attention of the reader."

admirable "new criticism"; the multiplication of little magazines with littler and littler circulations; the flowering of "difficult" poetry; the modest successes of such an uncompromising publishing house as New Directions, or such a vanguard magazine as *Partisan Review*; the limited but definite triumphs of the Great Books movement; the attention given to such educational "experiments" as St. John's College and such traditional pronouncements as those by educators like Hutchins and Conant—all these apparently disparate phenomena are really symptoms, not of the numerical growth of those who cultivate the faculty of attention, but rather of the growth of the intensity of their need for some mental pabulum other than that supplied by the central culture-purveyors of our time.

We may put it another way. From the time of the Greeks and early Hebrews up to the triumph of the nationalist spirit, and the industrial revolution, the "highbrow"—Moses, Socrates, Thomas Aquinas, Voltaire—was instinctively regarded, however vaguely, as a leader of the human race. He fought, even if unsuccessfully, a vanguard action. Today the "highbrow"—Schweitzer, Hutchins, Einstein, Freud, Sir Richard Livingstone—is instinctively regarded, even when accorded a certain mechanical respect, as contrary to the trend of the times. He is attacked regularly, not by obscurantists, which is to be expected, but in the columns of the most thoughtful and responsible newspapers and periodicals. He fights a rear-guard action.

If we limit our attention to literature alone, the fact that this action is rear-guard manifests itself in dozens of ways. For instance, in a nation of 140,000,000, we have only two serious monthly magazines of general appeal—*Harper's* and *The Atlantic Monthly*. As we should expect (for they satisfy the intense thirst of a cultural out-group) their circulation is faithful, but it is also limited, and does not keep pace either with the growth of the general population, or with that of the specifically "literate." These and a few other serious magazines — including your own *Saturday Review* — make valiant efforts to print material that demands a real effort of the attention.

BUT it is needless to point out that the magazines that really talk to the heart of our country are not these, but the others—the digests, the pulps, the picture magazines, the weekly news catalogues, the smooth-paper monthly mammoths. These vary widely in literary finish and "sophistication"—but they have in common this: they make no rigorous demand on the faculty of attention.

Some of the obvious characteristics of this journalism are: brevity, superficiality, simplification, the emphasis on timeliness (with its corollary, the conscious neglect or unconscious ignorance of the past), planned non-literary English, the avoidance of abstract ideas, the compartmentalization of life (this compartmentalization, as in the news magazine, is the verbal analogue of mass production's division of labor), the emphasis on "personalities" as well as the avoidance of *personality*, the exploitation of the "column" as against the discursive essay, the preference of the wisecrack to wit, the featuring of headlines (here, as elsewhere, modern journalism reveals its kinship, quite proper and natural, with advertising), the often remarkable ingenuity displayed in "packaging," an almost religious veneration for the "fact" (to be "well informed" is our substitute for the capacity to reflect), the rapid alternation of appeals (known as "balance," or something for everybody), and the careful exploitation of certain not highly cere-

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bral interests, mainly in the areas of vicarious sex, criminality, violence, "inspiration," gadget-worship, and the idolization of contemporary gods, such as cinema stars, sports heroes, and clean-faced high-school girl graduates.

In general, a successful, technically admirable attempt is made to *attract* the attention without actually *engaging* it; to entertain rather than challenge; or, to use the editors' quite legitimate phrase, to be "readable"—that is, to present material which can be read easily and forgotten quickly.

(The reader is reminded that the above description is not intended to be pejorative or scornful. No reflection is here cast on the editors or publishers of these magazines. The appeal to inattention is as natural a development of our culture as is the mass-produced washing machine. There is nothing Machiavellian—with a few exceptions—about those who manipulate this appeal. To be indignant at them is equivalent to not loving our fate, and Spengler has told us how stupid and illogical *that* is.)

Pater thought the goal of all the arts was to approach the condition of music. It would seem that today the goal of the word is to approach the condition of the picture. The great triumphs of modern journalism have been accomplished not with the typewriter but with the camera; the lens is mightier than the sword. This is natural enough: the photograph (I am not referring here, of course, to the occasional production of a great camera-artist, such as a Steichen or a Gjon Mili) makes less demand on the attention than even the simplest sentence. It attracts at once; it induces an immediate stimulus, and it is forgotten directly. It is the ideal medium of communication without real connection, so ideal as to make it inevitable that the two great communications inventions of our time—the radio and the movie—should somehow copulate and engender television.

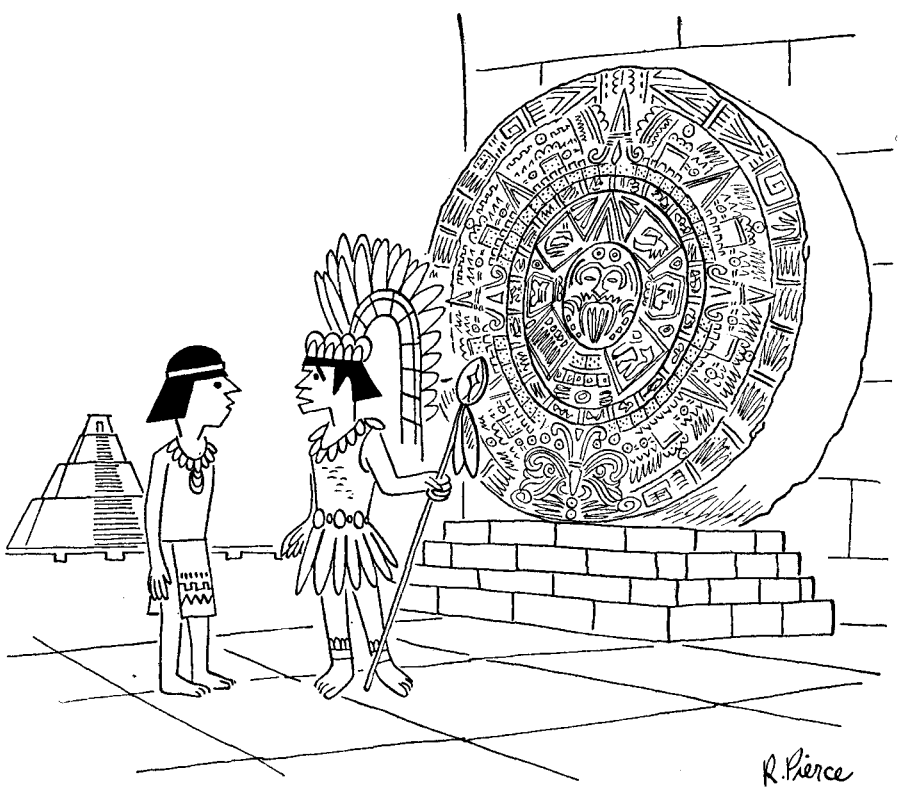
IT was advertising that did most of the pioneering for modern journalism, that discovered the value of the pictorial and the visible. Advertising led the assault on the solid page of prose, led it so successfully that nowadays even the editors of serious magazines worry about "breaking up" the page, introducing "white space," and similar problems. Visibility is the thing: the comic strip represents its outstanding triumph, and sky-writing its enthronement in heaven. (It is a curious fact that, when it is really and genuinely desired that the reader should *think*, a throwback is made to the old-fashioned "solid page." This is true whatever the content of the message—be it an advertisement for world government or one of the highly interesting arguments advanced by McGraw-Hill.)

The victory of the visible is closely associated with another victory—that of the clock. The long piece, the discursive essay, the attempt at a complete view of anything—these find publication only with difficulty. When *The New Yorker* devoted an entire issue to John Hersey's "Hiroshima," admiration for the narrative's qualities was far less intense than astonishment (shock is really the word) at the mere fact that so long a piece of prose should be presented to the magazine reader for a single reading. The shortened paragraph, the carefully measured column, the "punchy" sentence are, of course, minor by-products of our clock-worship which began, as Mumford has brilliantly demonstrated, in the late Middle Ages with the advent of the commercial spirit, and underwent a vast development with the triumph of industry and technique. We modern readers want to "understand" a piece of prose as quickly as, let us say, we can understand the dashboard of our new cars. In both cases we wish to increase the sense of our own "efficiency" by subordinating ourselves to the errorless perfection of a machine.

Hence the digest; hence the remarkable *Quick* (unaccountably so spelled instead of *Kwik*), which is a news digest of news digests. I find *Quick*, by the way, wholly admirable; it persuades me absolutely that there is no need to read a newspaper. (Yet, of course, the newspaper must be produced so that it may in turn produce *Quick*.) This super-digest not only makes little demand on one's mental attention; it makes little demand on one's physical or muscular attention. It fatigues neither the brain nor the eye. My only objection to it is that it seems to prove the needlessness of reading the news at all. One can easily imagine a digest of *Quick* (*Quicker*) and finally one of *Quicker* (*Quickest*). From *Quickest* to the non-reading of the news seems a logical next step, and one which we should contemplate with horror. We already know the possible consequences of such a habit: Thoreau's "Walden."

As already pointed out, we must beware of assuming that the prime *causes* of the decline of attention are to be found in such symptoms as *Quick*, advertising, the radio, television, the gossip column, the picture magazine, the soap opera, the mass-newspaper, the comic book, the pulps, the mammary-glandular "historical" works of fiction, the inspirational best seller, the cinema, the juke-box, the monosyllabic novel. They aid in the relaxation of attention, but they do not cause it. They are merely carriers of the germ.

Similarly, it is both ungenerous and superficial to blame our educational system. That, too, is a carrier, not a cause. It is true, as educators such as



"Personally, I find it a lot easier just to remember 'Thirty days hath September, April, June, and November'."

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Bernard Iddings Bell have pointed out, that on the whole our primary schools no longer really teach the child certain basic skills (how to read, write, speak, listen, and figure) the non-possession of which works against the development of attention. It is true, as Bell says, that many of our primary schools, through the system of mass-promotion ("Everybody has won," said the Dodo, "and all must have prizes") place a premium on mental laziness. It is true also that many of our high schools proceed on the make-the-work-interesting-to-the-student theory—which hardly conduces to the development of the intellect. Finally, it is true that the college, therefore, is forced to neglect its true function—which is to produce mentally mature leaders—in favor of performing, belatedly and therefore inefficiently, the elementary educational duties that are properly the province of the primary and secondary schools.

The school is an instrument of our society; it cannot be that and at the same time an agent of intellectual revolution. It cannot teach the virtues of attentiveness if the society of which it is a part indoctrinates the child hourly with the virtues of inattentiveness, or, rather, with the virtues of attentiveness to things, techniques, machines, spectator sports, and mass amusement, as against the virtues of attentiveness to knowledge, wisdom, and the works of the creative imagination.

The school—there are, of course, notable exceptions—has in general become a kind of asylum or refuge rather than an educational institution. In his noble jeremiad "Crisis in Education," Dr. Bell quotes a high-school principal as saying: "My real business is to keep adolescent boys and girls, regardless of educational aptitude and desire or the lack of them, from running the streets, getting into trouble, and becoming an intolerable nuisance in the community. The easiest way to keep them willing to submit to the school's control and so, incidentally, to hold my job, is to provide for them a vast amount of amusement and a minimum of work to do."

THIS seems a fair statement. All it means is that if our culture desires to produce, not rational men, but producers and consumers, the school becomes a useful place in which to quarter and divert the youthful citizen until he is old enough to produce and consume. The point is well put, entirely without irony, by Professors Russell and Judd, of the University of Chicago, in "The American Educational System": "Most young people today are not able to enter industry or other

types of gainful employment before age eighteen; in many cases not before age twenty. The best method of occupying the time of such young people is an important problem, and the solution of this problem by requiring an extended educational period, regardless of the immediate value of the education as such, may be socially wise." Dr. Bell further quotes them as saying that American education may have to depart from the usual academic and vocational disciplines if it is to be "made of sufficient interest to appeal to most young people in this country."

It is clear that this conception of the school is not at all eccentric or cynical. It is realistic. It simply tunes in on the wave-band of our society in general. However, it is also clear that it will hardly be apt to produce men and women capable of paying attention to a reasonably complex story or exposition, much less capable of reacting to the highest types of literature, such as poetry, tragic drama, philosophy, or religious reflection.

The phrase quoted above, "of sufficient interest to appeal," is the crux of the matter. The future citizen is made the criterion; you must "appeal" to him, or be lost. Thus the reading public becomes a "consuming public" that must be *sold* words and thoughts. In consequence the writer tends more and more to obey the doctrine of cultural Jacobinism—to wit, that he is equal to his audience, but not superior to it. He must "please," and the quickest way of pleasing involves simplification, overemphasis, and all the other ingenious techniques of modern communication.

Naturally, a great many writers, members of the outgroup, reject this theory. They believe that if they do not know and feel more than their audience, there is no particular point in being a writer. They write, therefore, in accordance with outmoded standards—and to date have succeeded, as a general thing, in finding an audience of people more or less like themselves, relics, holdovers. This audience, particularly in free countries like our own, is still quite numerous. It supports many excellent publishers, several book clubs, a multitude of good bookstores. It welcomes eagerly such novelists as Graham Greene, Miss Compton-Burnett, Elizabeth Bowen—writers who are not ashamed, nay, are proud, to make stiff demands on the attention of the reader. But, whatever it may contribute to our culture, it does not appear to be solidly in the mainstream.

THAT mainstream is composed largely of men and women whose faculty of attention is in process either of decay or displacement. In decay it is incapable of grasping reasonably complex works of literature or speculation. In displacement it is highly capable of grasping the often formidable intricacies of business, machinery, technique, sports, and war. (War and sports seem to be particularly favored as the areas in which our faculty of attention deploys itself most efficiently; war—when not fought for a principle—and sports merge the maximum of movement with the minimum of meaning.)

For the fundamental causes of the decline of attention, we shall have to go back to our quotation from Wordsworth. They lie deep in the history of the last 300 years and are almost surely connected with the rise of aggressive nationalism and the victory of the industrial revolution. At some point in the not very remote past a profound shift in our thinking took place. An interest in altering and vanquishing the environment by means of mechanical techniques plus an interest in material accumulation began to oust our traditional interest in discovering the nature of man and expounding his relation to God. Nationalism set itself up against universal thought, substituting for it local and temporal dogma. Industrialism erected definite, easily understandable standards of values, quite at variance with the ethical, religious, and esthetic standards that had, at least in theory, prevailed before its time. These standards "paid out"—that is, the man who lived by them found himself becoming "successful" or "adjusted."

It seemed more useful to fix the attention on a new system of double-entry bookkeeping or the mechanism of the internal-combustion engine than

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on "Hamlet." It *was* more useful: it was also more enjoyable.

If the man who likes "Hamlet" finds himself a member of an outgroup, even a tolerated outgroup, sooner or later he may wonder whether it's worthwhile to like "Hamlet." If there are no, or few, social rewards accruing from the exercise of the faculty of attention, he may tend increasingly to permit its attrition. If the rational man is made more and more to look like a fool (and, in our time, let us confess it, he *does* look like a fool, even though he is not one) he may cease to prize his rationality. Very few like to be reactionary, setting themselves against the current of their time. Most of us want to be part of contemporary history, and if contemporary history does not demand of us any rigorous ordering of the faculty of attention, we will either allow it to decline or we will fix it upon those objects or processes in which the majority of our fellow-citizens seem to be genuinely interested.

The humanist will cry out against all this; but he forgets that humanism itself is no more than 3000 years old, a short parenthesis in history. At one time the mental habits of the caveman prevailed over the earth. There seems no absolute reason why the mental habits of George Orwell's robot man of 1984 should not come to prevail during the next few hundred years. Those reactionaries who believe that man is unchangeably a rational soul will have faith that Orwell's world, too, will pass; and that man is bound to return to the pursuit of those goods Socrates and Jesus pointed out to him. But it is doubtful that this return will on a large scale come to pass in our own time. For the moment the humanist would seem constrained to bide his time and conserve the faculty of attention as the church conserved the riches of the classical tradition during what is unfairly called the Dark Ages.

There is a hope—not a great one—that he may enjoy a victory even in his own time. For, underneath all the triumph of the machine and aggressive nationalism and the closed police state, there seethes a vague unease which has nothing to do with class or race or nation. It does not understand itself, this unease; and so far, because it does not understand itself, it has been easily neutralized or harmlessly canalized. It may not come to the surface. But it may. If it does, it will find some of its leaders among those whose faculty of attention has not atrophied, among those who are now being made to feel a bit alien, a bit suspect—among philosophers, educators, scientists, humanists in general. Mind-man has not fought his last battle; nor has Thing-man quite won his first.

2. *The American Malady*

HOWARD MUMFORD JONES

Howard Mumford Jones

"THE American writer," says Stephen Spender, "is the most isolated in the world." Mr. Spender's article appears in the March 1949 issue of *Horizon;* it is the product of eighteen months in the United States, and it deserves thoughtful reading. He thinks this isolation is the inevitable product of complex causes. There is among us no "conscious community" of literature, albeit he also insists that there is a reading public in America of from 30,000 to 50,000 interested in cultural development, which the magazines fail to locate. Success and failure are alike instruments of isolation—success, because it cuts the writer from his early experience and warps him by pressures of publicity and exploitation; failure, because the writer has no hope (but how does Mr. Spender know?) of being understood by a later generation. The universities support poetry and produce criticism, but, says he, a kind of cultural ossification is likely to take place in them. "The American malady," he concludes, "is a spiritual one, the commercialization of spiritual goods on an enormous scale."

Mr. Spender's indictment is in part familiar, but it is distinguished by deeper insight than that which commonly appears in such valuations. Whatever the plight of the author in America, the European writer finds something provocative and profitable in coming here, as, for example, W. H. Auden has done, and this fact leads Mr. Spender to distinguish two aspects of loneliness. Loneliness can be both sterile and creative. Sterile loneliness is the facile acceptance of the separation of the writer from the community, the sneering by the successful at the unsuccessful. But productive loneliness is something else:

> Productive loneliness perhaps expresses the American tragedy of a great continent without a center. It is a loneliness of clarity free of the insidious intellectual connections and commitments which now threaten to betray the individual European talent by involving it too much in the unbelief of a declining civilization.

"Stephen Spender puts the case neatly . . ."

In trying to estimate Mr. Spender's analysis, one faces certain difficulties. The first is the necessity of avoiding that parochial defense which ends in taking a stance like Lowell's and talking about a certain condescension in foreigners. Mr. Spender is not condescending, and in a good and hearty sense he is no foreigner. The second necessity is to avoid the *tu quoque* argument. If cultural malaise appears in American writers, it is, Mr. Spender indicates, also deeply interfused in European writing, or so the despairing indictments by persons as different as Briffault and Kafka exist to prove.

One can, of course, argue that that we are all living in the late afternoon of a dying civilization, but this puts the whole problem into another context, and you do not alleviate the loneliness of the American poet by telling him that a European artist is even more sorrowfully alone. Finally, nothing is gained by questioning Mr. Spender's guesses—for example, the audience of 30,000 to 50,000 which he thinks none of the cultural periodicals has discovered. Mr. Spender has traveled in thirty states and visited forty colleges, and he knows, I suspect, far more about the American reading public than the booksellers do.

Certain elements in the analysis are, as I say, traditional. The rapidity of change in America, the size of the continent, the worship of the bitch goddess success, the desire—indeed the necessity—of publishers to exploit

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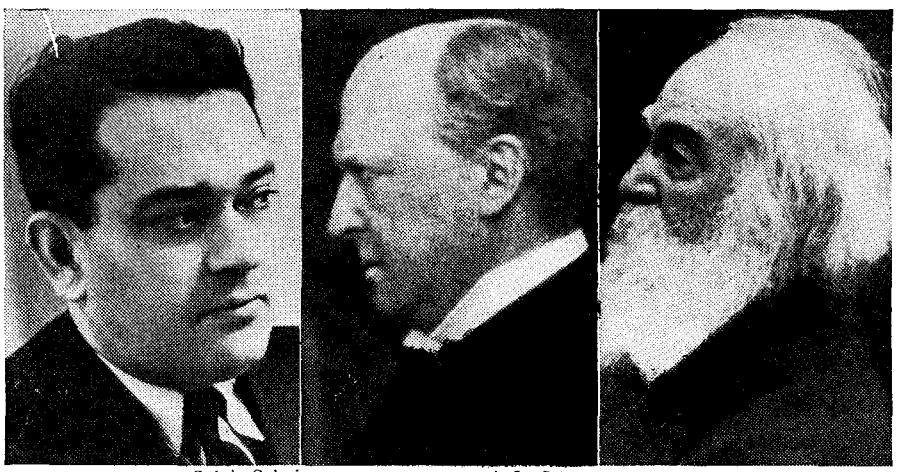
talent and by "typing" authors destroy them—these have been urged against America since the creation of the republic. Neither Mr. Spender nor I can avoid oversimplification. The pressures of "editing" are, indeed, tremendous, and he that writes for the slick magazines must expect to be turned out slick. It is also true that American publishing has had to seek mass sales by mass advertising. Nevertheless, it was a member of a standard commercial house who whipped into shape the manuscripts of Tom Wolfe, just as it was a commercial publisher who, a hundred years ago, insisted on bringing out "The Scarlet Letter." The relations of James T. Fields, Horace E. Scudder, W. C. Brownell, Roger Burlingame, and others like them, to



—Sylvia Salmi. —A. L. Coburn.

Philip Rahv (left) finds only two traditions in American literature—that of the paleface and that of the redskin, Henry James and Walt Whitman.

all varieties of talent are as much a part of the record as the hurly-burly of the day. The simple opposition of the exploited author and the greedy mass-production house will not do. Publishing cannot continue unless new writers appear, even the commercial house is committed to nourishing new talent, and only the publisher's treasurer knows how many thousands are annually expended in "advances" to promising writers who never pay off. Indeed, many of the books to which Mr. Spender appeals in support of his thesis that American writers are ill at ease in America are published by the general houses. I join Mr. Spender in heartily condemning the idiotic advertising now "promoting" the sale of books—idiotic because the purchaser cannot determine whether the new volume is a sober work of art or a merely sensationalized job—but one may reasonably doubt whether mass publishing is the villain of the show.

Nor does Mr. Spender quite say it is. The central question is the loneliness of the writer in America, the extent of the social and spiritual unrest which characterizes serious work by serious writers. The central question is whether this dissatisfaction is novel or unusual, whether it is symptomatic, as is sometimes alleged, of a frightening collapse in culture. The artist is a barometer sensitive to change; and precisely as historians now detect in the poetry of the fourth century prophecies of the fall of Rome, precisely as the cynicism of Regency France and the scepticism of the age of Louis XV foretold the Revolution, so, it has been inferred, the emphasis upon violence, brutality, and decadence in American writing, particularly in fiction since World War I, reminds us that our times are also revolutionary and compels us to consider whether these novels and poems spring from a haunting sense of the world's decay. Mr. Spender puts the case neatly when he says that reading American novels leaves on him not the impression of a vital, progressive society but of the Russia of Dostoievsky and Chekhov.

The unhappiness exists; the problem is to find a unit of measurement by which to determine whether the spiritual ailment is, as it were, abnormal. The contemporary writer, it is clear, is in no position to determine the relativity of his dissatisfactions. For him the hurt is here and now, and it does not help him to be told that heaven and earth ail from the prime foundation.

I do not know how to measure felicity from age to age, but it helps keep art in perspective to remember that violence, brutality, and decadence are traditional, not new. What I may call the Gothic strain in American writing begins with the sentimental novel of the 1790's and continues down through "Sanctuary" to "The Naked and the Dead." The Gothicism of Brockden Brown, of Poe, of Cooper, of Simms, of Hawthorne, of Melville, of "Nick of the Woods," by Richard Montgomery Byrd, or of "The Quaker City," by George Lippard, of Ambrose Bierce, even of Henry James in "The Turn of the Screw," that exercise in vague but universal evil, is a Gothicism of violence, brutality, and decadence. The shudder of one generation becomes the laughingstock of another, yet Freneau's "House of Night" was as terrifying to its first readers as "The Snake Pit," and the suffering of Arthur Gordon Pym was no less excessive than the suffering of Temple Drake. As Hawthorne remarked in "The Scarlet Letter": "It is a curious subject of observation and inquiry, whether hatred and love be not the same thing at bottom." The observation is a century old; it has an oddly modern ring.

IN American writing, the mood of cultural nihilism is likewise nothing novel, nothing strange, albeit it has not always expressed itself in imaginative work. At the opening of the last century Fisher Ames could remark: "As to liberty, we are to have none—democracy will kindle its own hell, and consume in it." In 1812 Robert Treat Paine thought that the "feculence of party is not yet drained of its rankest sentiment," and was fearful lest the "frozen snake" of democracy might revive. Calhoun assumed as a matter of course that society involves "a universal state of conflict" accompanied "by the connected passions of suspicion, jealousy, anger, and revenge." In 1849 Poe amused himself by comparing the republic to a town of prairie dogs and declared that "a republican government could never be anything but a rascally one." Thoreau's repudiation of the state is famous. In that confused, yet characteristic poem, "Clarel," Melville, in in the midst of the Gilded Age, expressed a violent reaction against the course of popular culture

> whose rule abhorred
> Yearly extends in vulgar sway,

put the United States under the aegis of "the star called Wormwood," and saw the future as a

> Dead level of dead commonplace,
> An Anglo-Saxon China, see,
> May on your vast plains shame the race
> In the Dark Ages of Democracy.

"I should not like to say that this is an age of human cowardice," wrote bitter Bierce in 1899. "I say only that . . . a modern battle is a quarrel of skulkers trying to have all the killing done a long way from their persons." The cultural pessimism of Mark Twain, notable in "The Man that Corrupted Hadleyburg" and "The Mys-

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terious Stranger," is as dark as the cultural pessimism of the twentieth-century novel.

But when historical considerations are urged, the aggrieved modern (by which I do *not* mean Mr. Spender) either denies their relevance or infers only that the malady is older and deeper than he had thought. He asserts that the writer has not been, the writer cannot be happy in our gross, vulgar, materialized continent, and there he rests his case.

HISTORICAL perspective, however, takes away the unique urgency of the dictum that the American author is the most isolated author in the world, it reduces the claim of special loneliness to proper proportions, it permits the reader to estimate contemporary grief in its temporal aspects and to discount honest, but exaggerated, claims to peculiar suffering.

Yet the fact of isolation remains, and the cumulative sense of unrest in poem and novel is undeniable. Amid the thousand considerations which may explain or accuse American culture in this regard, two seem to me worth considering. The contemporary writer appears to be in the difficulty of accepting the Jeffersonian emotions without accepting also the Jeffersonian responsibilities. The sound political dictum that everyone is entitled to individual dignity because everyone is an end in himself has been twisted by poets and novelists into the curious modern parody: every personality is entitled to express itself and therefore whatever interferes with the free satisfactions of the personality is wrong. Our novelists are in striking measure novelists of private and highly personalized relations among characters —who, indeed, often cease to be characters because their creators see them as vast, tender, suffering, personalized ganglia. Our poets have been explorers of that dark continent, their own "reactions." But a society is not a collection of personalities, it is a collection of persons—that is, of individuals defined not merely by private gratifications but also—how hard it is to say the thing rightly!—by both the benefactions and the responsibilities of social life. It is by maintaining a just balance between the two sides of a character in a novel that writers like Ellen Glasgow and Willa Cather succeed as artists; and it is the confusion of person with personality that makes a novel like "The Sound and the Fury" so dubious a success. Like Antigone, Huckleberry Finn, in freeing Nigger Jim, ascends to individual dignity because he ascends to individual responsibility, but I confess, powerful as the novels are, "Studs Lonigan" remains a case in slum clearance.

The second consideration which I think illuminating has to do with "tradition." Philip Rahv, for example, is characteristic of a whole wing of modern writers when he finds only two "traditions" in American literature—that of the paleface and that of the redskin, Henry James and Walt Whitman. When political problems appear, writers scurry to take refuge under the shadows of Jefferson, Lincoln, and Whitman, but when the cloud vanishes, the tradition is the tradition of unhappiness—Edwards, Hawthorne, Melville, James, Hart, Crane. These "traditions" have become the stock in trade of university courses and of collegiate instruction in writing, which produce more authors than the public is aware of; and talk of tension and release, of levels of meaning, of ambiguities, of myth-making and much else, sometimes delicately prepares the novice for suffering to come. But surely paleface and redskin do not exhaust the American tradition.

There was, for example, a very great stylist, one of the few English writers to rival Swift in the creation of perspicuous prose, a man who commanded the attention of a world of readers in the eighteenth century, by name Benjamin Franklin, who, though he wrote neither novel nor poem, has been called the first civilized American. There was Emerson, the Yankee Plato, who, threatened by tuberculosis, out of a job, losing wife and child, at odds with the whole drift of public policy, misunderstood by the dull and the narrowly religious, achieved such serenity as none but Goethe could display, and who remains one of the most marvelous stylists in the American canon. There were also (peace to the intellectuals!) Bryant, Longfellow, Whittier, and Holmes, whom the moderns do not trouble themselves to read but who are still worth pondering, still worth studying, if we could but persuade ourselves that lucidity is a quality of mind, not evidence of mental stupidity, and whose adjustment to the fiercest period of American life sprang from qualities of self-discipline moderns tend to despise. There is, in our own time, George Santayana, alien in the American scene, whose greatness of spirit gives us the measure of Henry Adams's egoism. There is, in sum, a neglected tradition in America, a tradition of civilized thought, of dignity, of civic virtue, if I may use a forgotten phrase that once had considerable meaning.

I AM not wholly persuaded that the American malady is the commercialization of spiritual goods on an enormous scale, baleful though elephantiasis may be. Greek drama, border ballads, the standard operas, and the novels of Dickens and Scott appealed (or appeal) on enormous scales to their respective publics. I think the malady of American writing is the exaggerated importance with which present modes of literary training and interpretation humorlessly discuss "writing." To "write" has become a good, mystic and absolute, it is the free expression of the personality, it is primitive and unarguable like breathing or having babies. When, however, the reading world finds this business of writing less interesting than its promulgators say it must be, the writer declares, not that he is ill adjusted to

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his audience, but that his audience is ill adjusted to him. Yet I wonder if the audience, or the publisher, or commercialization, or the size of the continent is alone to blame. Criticism, according to Dr. Johnson, is a study by which men grow important and formidable at very small expense; and the criticism which exploits personality without demanding character, creates in the long run a false notion of art. The kind of literary evaluation which turns "Moby Dick" into a problem of the homosexual personality overlooks the fact that the book is a rattling good sea-story. It is only in the sham world of "writing," moreover, that the homosexual personality is more important than the Aristotelian demand for beginning, middle, and end. I suspect that the opposition is not that between the dedicated few and the vulgar many, however desperate the economics of writing and publishing may be. I suspect the trouble is in the failure of "writers" to discover the thirty or fifty thousand potential readers interested in cultural development, whom the magazines do not reach and whom Mr. Spender has discovered.

Last year a book called in English "The Dilemma of the Arts," by Vladimir Weidlé, was translated and published in London. M. Weidlé seems to want to cure whatever is wrong with the arts by a *mystique* of prayer and repentance wherein I cannot follow him, and he over-flogs that much battered period, the nineteenth century. But he seems to me to put his finger on the error of the moderns when he writes:

> At no period has art responded to merely esthetic demands. Gothic sculptors served God in working for His faithful; portrait-painters aimed at resemblance; Chardin's peaches and hares were in place in the dining-room above the family table. In some, but quite rare, cases artists suffered because of it; but art as a whole profited from it: all the great periods of art bear witness to that.

So long as the contemporary writer contents himself with a solipsistic universe; so long as he more or less assumes that the only duty of his audience is, as it were, to watch changes in the artist's personality through a literary window into the soul, so long, it seems to me, the writer will be bound to his dissatisfactions. The musicians have now invented the concept of *Gebrauchsmusik*. Is it not time to quit insisting that all the adjustments must come from the side of the reader, and to consider whether a *Gebrauchspoesie* (as in the case of Franklin and Jefferson and Emerson and the rest) might not lessen the American malady?

3. *Time Without a Theme*

BERNARD DeVOTO

Bernard DeVoto

WHAT is the "prevalent view" of American literature today? Is it, say, the same as despair? In literary symposiums, which tend rather to noble than to clear thinking, you usually find out by deciding that one "view" is the prevalent one and ignoring those at variance with it or saying that they don't count. That gives one view official status. One thing I like about the last few years in American writing is that nobody has been able to isolate an official or prevalent view with much conviction. Just now there is no particular set of literary ideas that seem to have official status, and that's all right with me.

Where should we start looking for the prevalent view? Since the poets decided to abstain from communication in order to practise the interior dialogue I haven't understood them very well. The *Kenyon Review*, which I rely on to translate them, confuses me by changing its reading every quarter, but I understand that there is considerable contention not only about what they mean but about what they say as well. The novelists? Today's fiction seems to me remarkably diverse. I see no way of squaring its diversity into a prevalent view about the civilization of the day. There isn't any prevalent way of reporting the individual human being's response to the experience that comes to him, and it is the novelist's primary job to do just that. Actually, there never is. Too many different individuals, too many experiences, too many ways of responding to them—too much high spirits, too much courage, too much despair, too much irony, rebelliousness, fatalism, egotism, acceptance, withdrawal, fashion, illusion, neurosis. Too many ways in which fiction can be honest according to its lights or accurate or deceived. I don't know how you can isolate one set or kind of reports and say this is the prevalent view unless you call fouls on the others.

I will trust novelists (good ones) and poets (when I can understand them) to describe truly the emotions and behavior of people as they understand them, especially when they begin with their own. The very qualities that enable them to describe these things also tend to make them oversuggestible, over-excitable, prone to follow eddies of fashion in expression, and prone to shape the experience of others in the image of their own. But, allowing for all that, I will trust them, up to their capacity, at their primary job. They are doing it pretty well right now, I think, if not with universal glory. Universal or even prevalent glory is always in retrospect anyway, and the individual reports on the impact life is having on them aren't commensurable. Take the ten novels most highly praised by the *SRL* in each of the last five years. I don't remember what they were but I'm confident that you would have to do some pretty vigorous ignoring in order to isolate a prevalent view. And if you succeeded in isolating it, it wouldn't be commensurate with the prevalent view arrived at by the same process in, say, the *Partisan Review*.

The direct report of experience and the emotion it causes, which is the job of poets and novelists (have we got any dramatists?), offers no difficulties, though it also obstinately resists codification. The difficulties begin when we come to much more vigorously creative writers, those who take the poets and the novelists and with them spin fantasies of the truth (the true truth) about society, the duty of man, the nature of reality, and the

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imperatives of thought. That is literary activity of an entirely different kind and it leads to trouble. It is the application of literary ideas in fields where, it invariably turns out in the end, they do not apply and cannot be made to produce reliable results. Actually, when we are asked "What is the prevalent view?" the question is not about the attitudes of contemporary writers but about the civilization of their day. That, I think, is why we are invited to isolate a single prevalent view.

I think we are to find that despair is the prevalent view, and that the social and spiritual unrest it stems from stems in turn from the addition of atomic energy to the energies of war. But that would be to ignore things which I find it impossible to ignore, and it would decree that there is a true gospel to which literature must conform, and finally it would be literary thinking out of place. You get pretty fantastic results, pretty meaningless results. Norman Cousins has said that the atomic bomb made modern man obsolete. I'm sorry but that seems to me a literary idea out of place. It seems meaningless, as if he had said that oxygen is obsolete. Modern man is here, so is oxygen, and he has got to go on breathing it.

AS for despair, is it the prevalent view? I don't think so unless you want to start calling fouls. As for society, isn't unrest one of its basic and defining conditions? Isn't society usually in crisis? I happen to work in two periods when the American society came close to perishing, following the end of the Revolution and during the Civil War. Or think of Great Britain under either of the Pitts, or of Europe as a whole throughout the eighteenth century or during the Hundred Years War. As for the individual, isn't spiritual unrest one of his necessary conditions and hasn't it always been? When has it been possible for intelligence to look on reality without some measure of horror, terror, and disgust? When has not despair been a free, common, and justified response, ever since Greek poets started to make literature of it? What age has not been an Age of Anxiety? Who said that the Tragic Sense of Life was born on the morning of Hiroshima? How old are the Cities of the Plain?

Is the solution for our times to be world government lest we perish forthwith? Well, shortly after the election I took part in a forum, which is an even more effective way than a symposium of procuring noble thought in public, along with Henry Wallace and others. A couple of the others and I were there to explain that one desirable conservation measure needed

a Congressional appropriation of nine million dollars a year—about two cents as appropriations go these days. We were ridden out of the play by a strayed literary thinker wearing an economist's crepe beard. He told us that the Hundred Days of Truman had begun and our two cents would turn at once into thirteen billion dollars a year, enough to build our measure to the moon and back and permit all conservationists to retire to golf and literature forever. After the public session I asked him how much of his vision he expected to put over and how soon. He showed a positively literary reluctance to be held to the possible and low but he finally said, "Well, I think we can get the Missouri Valley Authority Bill out of committee next Congress." We are not going to get even his thirteen billion dollars' worth of world government within the time limits set. If world government soon is the solution, it would be decent of us to start making the environment as favorable as we can for our successors, who, I understand, are going to be either the pygmies or the lichens and the molds.

But it is of the utmost importance that, while we are selecting an attitude of creative writers toward the civilization of their day, society itself has cast at least an *as if* vote for survival. We find despair the prevalent view and hold world federation its only possible resolution. Or Mr. Pritchett says that from now on the prevalent view is or has got to be moral significance. One sector of American writing, about which some of us used to say that a little antique American bumptiousness would heighten its tone, has become so damned American that it can hardly be borne. Another sector has found as much exhilaration in the sanction to deal seriously with religion, sin, and evil as writers found thirty years ago in the sanction to deal seriously with sex. Another sector is annihilating self to achieve Nirvana, another to work for the greater glory of God. In fact there is no single rabbit but a whole litter. There is no set of literary ideas or attitudes that can be called a prevalent view. And society, "the civilization of their day," is conducting itself outside them all and without reference to any of them.

The formulation of literary ideas (on the grand, or noble, scale) out of art, out of honest reports of the impact of experience on personality and its refraction through personality, is a mysterious process. And the codification of literary ideas and their extension as both a description of and a judgment on society is—well, it is an activity that follows the pleasure principle, not the reality principle. That it must be delightful the addiction of many minds attests but there comes a point where Dr. Kinsey should take over. Vision, nobility, intensity, idealism are very fine and their codification in prevalent views is sometimes admirably or even awesomely ingenious. But a literary idea is not an instrument for the description of society: the results are often in error or, since I prefer to put it more gently, meaningless. And it has no effect on society.

I KEEP three or four shelves of the *SRL* in my attic, and sometimes on rainy afternoons I go up there with a basket of apples and refresh my memory. Only fifteen years ago a prevalent view, which said it was derived from social and spiritual unrest, held that the American society was rotting outward from the core. Revolution was going to break out in the United States by next Friday and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat by the first of the month, and within a couple of years the state was going to wither away. One symposium in particular has kept its charm for me. A quarterly that was to die when the view changed asked some prevalent viewers to name the date when they expected the workers to take over the Maritime Commission, the National Park Service, the Bureau of Internal Revenue, and the rest of the enfeebled pluto-democratic bureaucracy. The most skeptical of them set a date so far in the future that it suggested he might be a counter-revolutionist: he thought it wouldn't happen till 1940.

That was an impressive rabbit. But in order to find it you had to call some even more impressive fouls. There was no way of bringing such a writer as, for instance, Willa Cather, into the

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prevalent view, so you dismissed her as an escapist—she was turning away from the social and spiritual unrest, no doubt in despair. Or Robert Frost. He wouldn't adopt the attitude of contemporary creative writers toward the civilization of their day that the prevalent view required; what was worse, he snickered at it. So you dismissed Mr. Frost with a worse epithet than "escapist"; clearly he must be a Fascist, crypto if not overt. Meanwhile it was a good (or in some organs of the prevalent view a great) novel if it ended with an organizer leading the workers out of the factory, with solidarity symbolized by the upraised fist in the last paragraph. Art was prefiguring the future because creative writers are prophetic if they have the official brand of unrest.

I PICK up an anthology and find that in the prevalent view these people were writing notable fiction, as Miss Cather wasn't: Clara Weatherwax, Ben Field, Mike Gold, Tillie Lerner, Grace Lumpkin, William Rollins, Jr., Philip Stevenson. We slept beneath their spell but where are they now? Or poets: Stanley Burnshaw, Joseph Freeman, Joseph Kalar, H. H. Lewis, William Pillin, Jim Waters, Don West. Considering the social and spiritual unrest that was going to make the state wither away two years from midnight of December 31, 1939, these people were, in the prevalent view, writing better because more significant poetry than that old Fascist Frost. I might hurt some feelings if I listed the socio-economico-literary critics who were laying the prevalent view on the line in vastly noble literary ideas. Look them up.

My point is not that in order to codify the prevalent view you had to guess wrong by half the diameter of the solar system and to ignore hundreds of writers, among them the best practising, though those are holes big enough to sink anything except a system of literary ideas. My point is, first, that the prevalent literary view was not in touch with and did not accurately describe the civilization of its time and, second, that the civilization of its time conducted itself without reference to the prevalent view. Presently the American society would fall apart and if any capitalists had not leaped off the Empire State Building they were going to be hunted down and shot, probably with a dumdum novel by Albert Halper. At that moment, adaptive, recuperative processes of the American society were at work all round the proletarian movement (as the prevalent view called itself), producing a new phase that landed the movement on a shelf in a museum. But the upraised fist came in between: noble thinking said that what was

happening could not happen. The actual event went unremarked by the prevalent literary view. Also the prevalent view went unremarked by the society that was changing its phase without permission from the rules committee of the proletarian movement. The society didn't know what the prevalent view was saying about it, didn't care, failed to conform to it, failed to be guided by it. With reference to the American people who do not consult literary ideas—a group which currently numbers a hundred and forty-eight million—the official attitudes were not merely wrong, they were meaningless.

Or take the war, which, I suppose, nobody will deny was the most important circumstance of "their day here and elsewhere." Something of a specialist in literary ideas, I can't see that the American society acted either as the literary formulations predicted it would or as they said it ought to. Or is now acting as any formulation says it must. It amuses some minds to reflect that the decadent democracy, undermined by its irreconcilable contradictions and visibly dying of internal hemorrhage, has now become a dynamic technological organism so powerful that it will bring the world down in ruins, if you belong to that persuasion, or, on the same data and by the same reflex of nobility, that it represents the last, best hope of earth, if you don't. But I see nothing which suggests that the literary descriptions of society have become accurate overnight.

Prayer for Living and Dying

By Christopher La Farge

O DEAR and loving God,
So wide and broad
Thine altar it can hold as gift
My old agnosticism as the loving shift
In which is wrapped acceptance of my Lord.

Forgive me, then,
That all the mounting sharpness of my years
Has ripped the Sistine panoply of robes,
Scissored the beard Blake gave the Elohim,
Made large but never dim
Thyself as concept magnified by tears,
Globe within globe, the rhyme
With which immensity holds the space of time.

Allow me, as I thank for daily bread,
Christ but thy son as I am thus thy son:
Man's frailty overleaping human ways;
Thus marveling how thy miracle is done
Because I humbly praise
Mary's lost maidenhead.

I too the voice within the whirlwind heard,
Stood speechless, breathlessly,
Unknowing how to loose Orion's bands:
Knowing that thy unfingered hands
Cast loose the atom from inviolate chains
And with sweet word
Set up as borders to infinity
A universe without any yet within;
Hearing the voice, I beg to know all sin,
All evil till the good alone distrains.

And then, and last, O dear and loving God,
Blow on my ashes with thy welcoming breath,
Cover my doubts with the immortal sod,
Carve love deep on my death.

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LOOKING BACKWARDS

1. *Fitzgerald: "This Side of Paradise"*

JOHN P. MARQUAND

John P. Marquand

I IMAGINE that nearly every novelist suffers certain qualms of embarrassment when, after a career of writing, he picks up the first book he wrote. Even a reviewer refers to a writer's first effort as a "first" novel—and such was Scott Fitzgerald's "This Side of Paradise," the first work of a very young man. Yet, if Scott Fitzgerald were alive today and were to glance again through the pages of "This Side of Paradise," I do not think that he would find many gaucheries or technical flaws and there is no valid reason why he should have the wish, expressed by so many writers, that his first book had never been published.

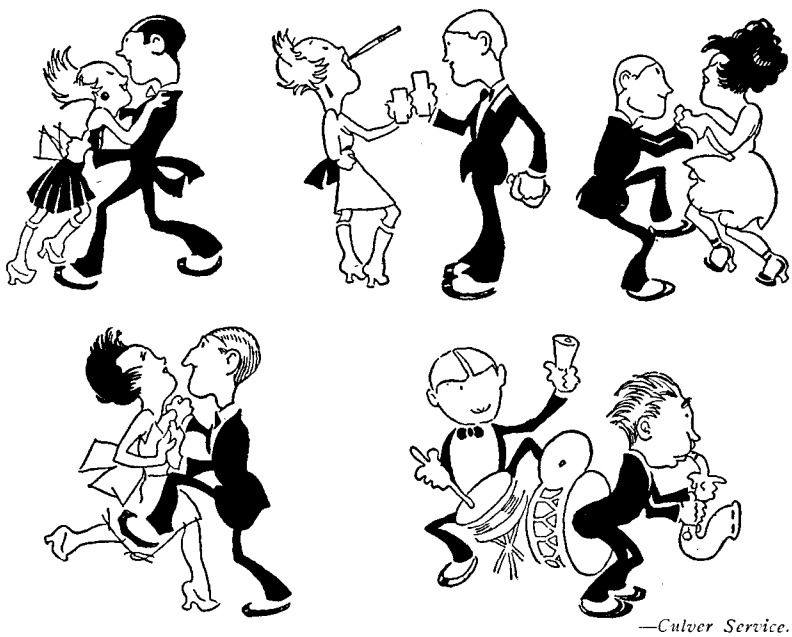
There was a story which went the rounds in the Twenties that when the young Fitzgerald submitted the manuscript to Charles Scribner's Sons, he wrote on the outside of it, "Keep in a cool, dry place." Obviously, Scribner's did not obey this injunction and neither did the world in general. There has been little that has been either cool or dry about life in the years following April 1920, when "This Side of Paradise" first saw the light, but somehow it is much better preserved than most of the rest of the Twenties. There is no calcification in its joints, no antiquated humor, no *vieux jeux* so embarrassingly prevalent in other works of that epoch. It still remains almost exactly as the reviewers first saw it, an exceptionally brilliant piece of work by a precocious young Princeton graduate who was perhaps a genius. Why is it that this book which dealt so exclusively with the shifting manners and morals of another generation should have withstood the test of time so well that it now possesses a certain element of timelessness? It is interesting to try to guess.

What made "This Side of Paradise" an immediate popular success, with an appeal to a large reading public who had never heard before of Scott Fitzgerald, was no doubt its contemporary risqué quality, including in particular an exposé of the immoralities of the younger generation in their revolt from Victorianism. In "This Side of Paradise" it was demonstrated for almost the first time in print that college boys and debs and sub-debs indulged in indiscriminate amorousness called petting or necking. It was revealed that very nicely brought up girls indeed frequently petted with the most casual acquaintances in somebody else's parked car outside of country clubs. They also were not averse to consuming moderate quantities of alcoholic liquor and one of these young things confided to Amory Blaine, Scott Fitzgerald's talented young hero, that she was full of the devil. Unfortunately, things have progressed so far that one can read of these revelations today without raising an eyebrow, not even when Amory Blaine and another egocentric and poetic young lady ride about the countryside at night and climb up to the top of haystacks. Instead, one wishes that one's own children behaved as sensibly and nicely as the "This Side of Paradise" galère, only exchanging a few conventionalized kisses, being careful not to get rumpled, and sublimating most of the sex urge in an exchange of very readable poetry and well-expressed love letters.

Even when Amory Blaine, in desperation when the selfish and unutterably beautiful New York girl, Rosalind, turns him down, seeks the solace of a few days' bender starting in the old Knickerbocker Bar, he controls his drinking quite nicely; and gives it all up when he is confronted by a somewhat mystic vision of the devil, who appears to him in the apartment of some loose girls before it is too late. Definitely, "This Side of Paradise" has no sensational quality left for a jaded reader of 1949.

Its enduring merit does not depend much on its plot or its characters either. The story, in case you have forgotten it, is the brief life pilgrimage of Amory Blaine starting as a pampered rich child in the clutches of his Catholic and dipsomaniac mother, through the painful adjustments of a secondary school, through Princeton with its clubs, proms, and literary societies and its New York parties, through World War I (an interlude largely skipped), and thence to a young man's realities in New York punctuated by unrequited love, a considerable consumption of liquor followed by financial ruin due to bad family investments, and then a final scene on the road back to Princeton in which Amory tells a big tycoon a few home truths about the economic and social system of the United States, which, curiously enough, are just about what an Amory of today would tell a big tycoon of the present.

During this series of episodes Amory meets a lot of nice Princeton and



—*Culver Service.*

John Held, Jr., with his gift for pert, though frazzled, types, was the ideal artist to illustrate F. Scott Fitzgerald's Jazz Age stories.

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a few Yale boys and a number of girls from prosperous families. He comes in contact only in the most insulated way with the proletariat. He is greatly impressed by a Catholic prelate, an old friend of his mother's, the only fully drawn adult in this book. Considering the character drawing in his masterpiece, "The Great Gatsby," where every individual stands out with beautiful and unforgettable clarity, it is remarkable how hazy and amorphous the Fitzgerald adolescents remain in "This Side of Paradise." Indeed, the characteristics of most of the boys and girls are as interchangeable as the parts of the series of identical combustion engines. Even the three loves in Amory's career, though these love affairs are handled with great verve and understanding, have interchangeable girls, each equally delicately beautiful, each naughty and selfish. When "This Side of Paradise" is finished, there remains an impression of a world and of motion, of bright lights and laughter, of abstractions but not people. Amory Blaine himself, the handsome, exquisite esthete, with all his doubts and drives is only an abstraction. There was never anyone like him and there never will be except in the aberrations of poetic youth.

The merits of "This Side of Paradise" which will save it from oblivion for many years to come, and which may even put it on a permanent shelf of American literature, fall into two simple categories. It was written by a great writer, the most naturally gifted and the most sensitive of any of his generation. That almost indescribable hallmark of stature is on almost every page. There is beauty, there is epigram, there is a precocious plumbing of emotional depth, representing a good deal more than a mere promise of greater things to come. There is a breathtaking quality of language containing something that one remembers beyond the context of the story. Besides, Scott Fitzgerald was writing of a world he knew and of the only world he could have known at his age, of school and schoolboys, of the Princeton undergraduate, of the Plaza and the brownstone fronts and the bright lights on Fifth Avenue, and he confined himself with the instinct of an artist exclusively to what he had known and lived. He wrote as splendidly as anyone ever has of his own youth, not as an older man looking back upon it and seeing parts of it in wry perspective, but as a very young man still living with its tragedies and frustrations, as yet unaware of its gaucheness, but acutely conscious of the welling stream of his own genius. All of "This Side of Paradise" is so filled with this finely distilled spirit that no one even today can miss it.

2. *Sinclair Lewis: "Main Street"*

LEWIS GANNETT

Lewis Gannett

THERE were no radios on Main Street, but the swankier Gopher Prairie homes had automatic pianos. Many of the younger girls wore thin lisle stockings; only the very bold wore lipstick. Main Street wasn't paved; it was proud of its new concrete sidewalks. Howland and Gould's, the better grocery store, stocked that sybaritic luxury canned asparagus. Nobody had yet dreamed of frozen foods; iceberg lettuce wasn't shipped in refrigerator cars from California, much less flown. Some drove Kutz Kars and Overlands, Paiges and Marmons, but the standard upper-class car was the Buick, and the middle-class, the Model T Ford. In winter the farmers put up their cars and got out sleighs; the roads weren't plowed. The library took in four magazines: *The Saturday Evening Post*, the *Outlook*, the *National Geographic*, and the *Literary Digest*.

It's period stuff today, almost a movie scene in its painstaking scene-setting accuracy. You note the details with fond affection. And you wonder, as you read: Is this the book that launched a thousand quips, and stirred the orators to deliriums of denunciation? Is this the tale that Sinclair Lewis thought would end his popularity—and that almost did? What *was* all the shouting about?

The shouting was about smugness. Gopher Prairie was Any Town, USA, in 1912-20, and Any Town was smug. Maybe Gopher Prairie is Any Town, USA, in 1949. Read it again. Forget your delight in the period decor. Gopher Prairie, Sinclair Lewis said in 1920, denied the Scientific Spirit and the International Mind; it was "a force seeking to dominate the earth, to drain the hills and sea of color, to set Dante at boosting Gopher Prairie, and to dress the high gods in Klassy Kollege Klothes." It was full of nice people, determined that the whole world should admit that the end and purpose of life was to ride in flivvers, and in the twilight to sit talking not of love and courage but (a period touch) of the convenience of safety razors. It was proud to "tack advertisements of cigarettes over arches for centuries dedicated to the sayings of Confucius."

We've changed, have we? Turn on your radio and twist the dials—pick up the *Congressional Record* and read almost any speech on "The American Way of Life." Then say we've changed!

Yet we have changed—a little. Rereading "Main Street" in 1949, it is obvious that it is an affectionate story, a fact that wasn't at all obvious in 1920. We were so smug then that any criticism seemed a hostile act. Even so perspicacious and friendly a critic as Carl Van Doren remarked, in an essay called "The Revolt from the Village," that "Main Street" evidenced how much Sinclair Lewis hated dull people. Lewis was immediately prompted to retort. He didn't hate dull people, he said; he loved them. He catalogued the dull male characters in his books whom he loved, and added that he loved Carol Kennicott, "who is dull about all the male world that interests Kennicott." He had certainly loved Will Kennicott, the country doctor who was blind to Carol's world of art and books and music; the point of the story was that Kennicott was at bottom a better guy than Carol. Lewis had had no intention of divorcing himself from his village; he was like a husband who had no dream of divorce in his mind, but would like to see his wife a little bit changed in this fashion and in that.

But in 1920 America was a wife who couldn't stand criticism. America read "Main Street," but it misunderstood it and resented and denounced it. The Pulitzer committee refused to award it a prize—an act for which Mr. Lewis had his revenge six years later, when he refused an award for "Arrowsmith." The anti-villagers who

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had herded into Greenwich Village in New York City hailed "Main Street," but they too misunderstood it. Sinclair Lewis was never a Greenwich Villager. He was and remains a prairie villager. His Carol Kennicott had picked up a bit of Greenwich Villageism in Minneapolis; but Sinclair Lewis had his village rebel put Carol in her place. "You want to do something for the town," Miles Bjornstam said. "I don't. I want the town to do something for itself." And the greatest wisdom that Sinclair Lewis could put in Carol Kennicott's mouth was her plea that at least she had never excused her failures by sneering at her aspirations.

I think that people will be interested in Sinclair Lewis's Gopher Prairie about as long as they will be concerned about Emerson's Concord or Tom Sawyer's Hannibal. The three villages belong together; the line is clear. (The Emersonian descent becomes explicit in Mr. Lewis's latest, most ambitious, and least realized book, "The God-Seeker.") Lewis never had more respect for the good rebel than for the good carpenter, automobile mechanic, or mouse-trap maker; you know at the end of "Main Street" that even Carol Kennicott's daughter will be of small use in Gopher Prairie, or anywhere else, unless she is first a good cook. But let her look out the window, too.

In 1928, eight years after "Main Street," Sinclair Lewis surprised the readers of *The Nation* by saying that his personal Utopia was very like that of Lorimer of *The Saturday Evening Post*; a world of miraculously convenient little homes, for people competent in their jobs, with vacations in Canada, the South Seas, or Paris. What he asked of his Kennicotts, he said, was merely that "they should know a little more history; that they should better understand the difference between Irish stew in America and fried mushrooms at Schoener's in Vienna; and that they should talk of the quest of God oftener than of the quest for the best carburetor." In 1949, Aaron Gaad, hero of "The God-Seeker," is introduced as a boy who will "be excited about life; about women, or the perpetual quest of God, of New Bedford rum." Mr. Lewis hasn't changed.

"Main Street" doesn't read like a crusading book today. Maybe it never was as much a crusading book as some of its readers assumed. It was, and is, a story about village people. Villages have existed for a long time. "Main Street" may too. When you look back over the history of the novel, it is seldom the self-conscious stylists who endure, and not always the profound philosophers. It is the passionate story-tellers, the Fieldings and Defoes and Dickenses—and Sinclair Lewises.

3. *Hemingway: "A Farewell to Arms"*

FRANCIS HACKETT

Francis Hackett

IN ONE detail time has dulled the luster of Ernest Hemingway's "A Farewell to Arms." He had gone through the First World War with the Italians and he put much of his own experience into that brilliant book. When he issued it in 1929 the story was still fresh but familiarity with war material now makes it a little trite. A wholly imagined experience, as in "The Red Badge of Courage," is the kind that keeps its salience, though Stendhal and Tolstoy triumphed in spite of knowing the actuality of war.

As an artist, however, Hemingway turns the background of war to his special purpose. It is a defect that his hero's enlistment with the Italians is given no weight. He seems to have gone along out of masculine camaraderie. But by keeping it relatively tame and incidental, Hemingway uses it as a springboard for the real story, which is a love story. Tension mounts from the moment when the narrator is wounded until, after his cure and his sharing in the Caporetto retreat, he becomes AWOL and breaks away to reunite with his former nurse. He had left her pregnant, without any visible distress, but he throws off the war as an obstacle to his romantic reunion. In this way war and love are inverted—deliberately.

—*Drawing by Rasmusson from the book.*

"Tension mounts until . . . he breaks away to reunite with his former nurse . . ."

It is easy now to see why Hemingway did this. The primitive mood of war gave him his chance to dig down into himself for a native primitiveness that peace had long ruled out of bounds in polite American fiction. The American male egoist, with a pioneer code and a greed for direct experience, was long circumvented in novels by those who took their cue from England. Not since Byron had made his postwar protest did any male writing in English hurdle all the polite barriers in an effort to vindicate natural appetites. If "A Farewell to Arms" has created an epoch it is because Hemingway had the art to do this trick.

The staccato jabs with which he hammered it home make many pages tedious, but his report of actual behavior as against any polite hint at it proved a great boon to a generation in transition. "I was not made to think," says Hemingway's hero, which is all too true. "I was made to eat. My God, yes. Eat and drink and sleep with Catherine. Tonight maybe." This frank eagerness of desire and the heightening of its keen moments Hemingway carries off with its best weapon, which is veracity in accent and detail. Except for the patent infantilism at the beginning, with over thirty "and"s on the first page, he achieves singularly clear and bold lines time after time. That is his prime distinction. It gives us plausible behavior, if not elucidation.

The disadvantage of the method is evident only on reflection. By bestowing on his hero a superb alimentary canal, a sufficient income from home for an undisturbed love life, and an adoring girl to complete it, Hemingway is extremely telling. He suggests the desirable no less vividly than Maupassant and as a storyteller he gives examples of narrative skill—as in his hero's escape from an execution squad, his flight into Switzerland with Catherine, and his vigil in the maternity hospital—which the author of "Bel-Ami" might well have envied. He can make such comments palpitant, exciting horror or disgust or shock of recognition, events pushing against the protagonist until he takes his own part.

But tragedy does not reside in events, however vivid. It gets its value from the dignity of the protagonist, and to eat, to drink, to sleep with Catherine do not constitute a full human destiny. Hemingway's

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hero is not a cur but he is a puppy, a destructive puppy whose gamboling comes high. Take his part in the Italian campaign. Though he does not hesitate to kill a deserter, he himself deserts when offered the same dose of medicine and then discards Italy like a wet bathing suit. His only claim to dignity is a certain masculine prowess, very attractive to the girls. But it is with irony that Maupassant depicts a more extreme case of this egoism in "Bel-Ami." And not even Odysseus, highly attractive to the girls as he was, could have been a triumph of the storyteller art had his masculine prowess had no greater object outside itself. His dignity is not diminished by his eating and drinking and fighting, but he transcends those. He has intercourse with the gods.

Catherine is the nearest to a divine object in "A Farewell to Arms," but she is essentially the male egoist's dream of a lover, a divine lollypop. At no time is she led to measure her strength against her hero. She is never individualized.

Hence the poignant end is a crushing blow from fate, not a true and inevitable outcome of destiny, unless we accept Hemingway's immature nihilism. It is a tribute to his art, so succinct and so conscious, that he hits the bull's eye he aims at, if we accept the pose he has adopted. But the primrose path down which he has led so many young novelists in their attempt to offer the masculine protest is in reality a dead end, and Ernest Hemingway's lyrical novel, for all its excellences, shows how sterile the primitive protest really is.

De Senectute

By Ben Ray Redman

AGE is not eyes, nor teeth, nor hair,
But simply a thing that's suddenly there.
It seems you are hardly a moment older,
When all at once it's behind your shoulder;
And you, of course, are the last to see it,
Although perforce it's your fate to be it.

Age is not months or years that pass,
But a careless glance in a morning glass.
Age, for a man, is what occurs
When his path begins to be strewn with "Sirs."
It's opened doors, and standing young—
And mounting odds that you'll die unhung.

4. Wilder: "Our Town"

JOHN MASON BROWN

COMING back to "Our Town," even in book form, after the altering years of war and so-called peace, is an experience at once poignant and reassuring. Most nations, most things, most of us who saw Thornton Wilder's play eleven years ago have changed immeasurably. It, however, remains unchanged. It has not gone out of style, as plays do with frightening rapidity. It does not seem old-fashioned. It has not lost its rightness. It tugs with its original directness at emotions which are beyond change.

Most people remember that in "Our Town" Mr. Wilder dispensed with scenery and depended upon his own words, a few properties, a stage manager, and the imagination of his audience for the setting of his stage. He did not work as a realist—at least in the ordinary sense or manner. He did not bother to contrive a story. Everybody's life was his plot. His acts divided themselves into the growing-up, the marrying, and the dying in one New England township. The swift race of the years was his villain, and man's blindness in running this race his sure appeal to our compassion.

Mr. Wilder was concerned with all those average things which are the common lot but which seem exceptional to each of us when we experience them. If he did away with scenery and relied on a stage manager to set his stage, it was because the human heart was his real scene. It was the heart of a community which he laid bare. This community, supposedly observed between 1901 and 1913, was as New England as the white spire of a Congregational church. Yet quaint in custom and removed in time though it was, it managed to include us all. What is more, it continues to do precisely this even when encountered in print and in an altered world.

Its first two acts are as effective as they ever were. In them the simple stuffs of youth, of parenthood, of school

—© 1938 The New Yorker Magazine, Inc.

In the play "Our Town": Frank Craven (left) comments to his pipe while his son John (left stepladder) engages Martha Scott (right stepladder) in a love passage. Below are Jay Fassett, Evelyn Varden, Helen Carew, and Thomas W. Ross.

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days and growing-up, of courtship and hoping, are caught with radiant imperishability. They manage to be general in their application even when stated in terms of individuals. Somehow they link the fires in New England homes with hearths everywhere, from today right back to Greece and Babylon. Although these acts are brightened by a dry, humorous, Yankee matter-of-factness, in their mood, perception, and tenderness they are poetic.

It is only in the concluding act that "Our Town" is disappointing. Here again I found the play unchanged because, for me at least, this last act, which has death and the dead as its subject, has always been a disappointment. Its chill is inescapable; its words are too colloquial; its ideas too small. The familiar aspects of living, dealt with so imaginatively in the first two acts, dwindle here into guesses unsupported by high imagination. There are many touching moments as when, for example, the young wife who has died in childbirth is allowed to return to her living parents for one unimportant day in her childhood. But there is a let-down. The surety of the two fine preceding acts is diminished, their universality lost.

In the Thirties, tingling as they were with social consciousness, there were those who complained because Grover's Corners was not more like Middletown. They could not believe in "Our Town" because it lacked brothels, race riots, front-page scandals, social workers, agitators, and strikes. The passing years, however, have only proved Mr. Wilder's correctness in writing as he did. His subject had no datelines. His interest was not what gets into the public prints. It was what each of us must live with in private. Man's spirit was his business; man's spirit and evocations of those small-important incidents which test us in our daily living.

Adding to the timelessness of the first two acts of "Our Town" is the non-representational form in which Mr. Wilder elected to have his say. It is make-believe of the frankest sort. It is as old as the theatre, and as new as the last time it was used effectively. Although it is not the kind of form that every playwright could use for every play, it is the right form for Mr. Wilder to have used for "Our Town." It sets him free. It leaves his imagination unimprisoned within settings. It relieves him of the need of employing the ordinary and quickly aging techniques of realistic plays. Indeed, it is as timeless as his own subject matter.

Not many plays have come out of the American theatre which better with the years. "Our Town" is one of these. Much as I admired it in 1938, I find that now I admire it even more.

5. S. V. Benét: "John Brown's Body"

EUGENE O'NEILL, JR.

Eugene O'Neill, Jr.

NEITHER sweetly nor correctly, "John Brown's Body" has been called a "cinema epic." Of these two words the former contains both the vinegar and the truth, while the latter is almost benevolent and definitely wrong.

To call it "cinematic" is not only correct, but also highly complimentary, if rightly taken. The film has shown conclusively that it is capable of esthetically valid achievements, when its makers are real artists and its producers give them a free hand. That the vast majority of films has no merit is not to be blamed on the medium.

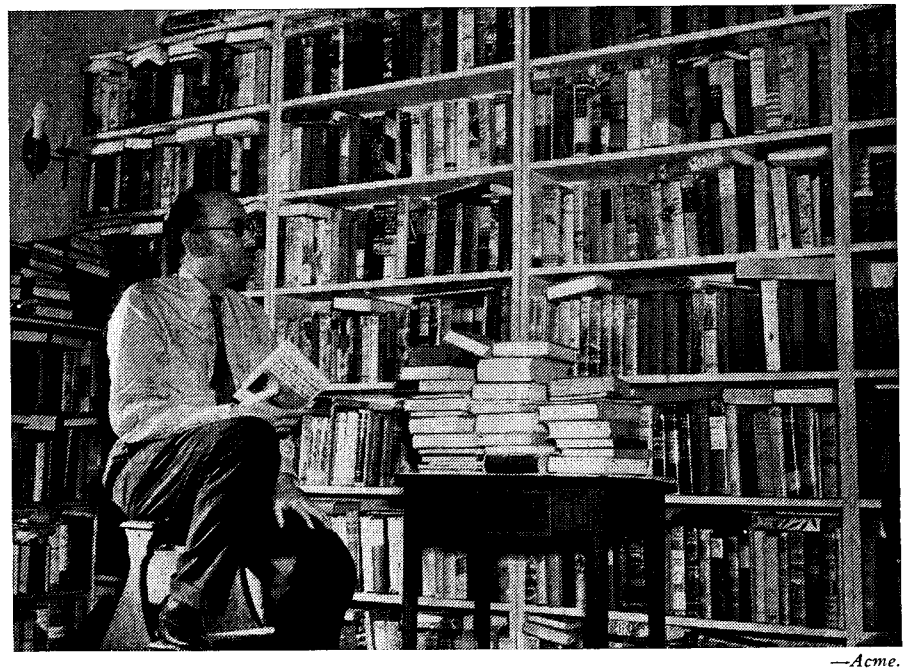
"John Brown's Body" is cinematic in the very best sense that the word can bear. It uses in literature all of the most successful techniques of the cinema, and uses them well. It is really a series of vignettes; almost a 300-page montage. Its highest moments are essentially close-ups. It uses flash-back and simultaneous portraiture as expertly as D. W. Griffiths ever dreamed. Its lyrical interludes are analogous to the narration of Pare Lorentz's documentaries, or, to shift to radio, the Olympian commentaries that Norman Corwin used to set to the fine voice of House Jameson.

Out of all this comes a long poem that has been bought and read by more Americans than anything comparable to it. Out of it comes a heterogeneous and conglomerate work, that can still dissolve one in tears, despite principial disapproval of many of its parts and some of its methods.

So bulky a theme as the Civil War is obviously worthy of a whole cycle of epics, but Benét's work can hardly be regarded as such. To call it an epic is to confuse its values. Only its subject has any connection with epic. In every other respect it departs widely from even the very flexible norms of the genre. It is not objective in attitude, despite its magnificent impartiality so far as North and South are concerned. Benét obtrudes himself on his reader again and again, with emotional and personal reactions and comments.

In the "Iliad" the most effective books (*e.g.*, the Embassy to Achilles, and the Ransoming of Hector) consist largely of speeches and are therefore basically dramatic, as Aristotle observed long ago. Of Benét's varying success with narrative we shall have more to say later. Dramatically, however, he consistently fails, even in the relatively small number of sections of the poem in which he tries. He never attempts anything comparable with the Embassy, much less with Odysseus's account of his adventures.

Some of the best parts of the poem are purely lyrical, and thus constitute



—*Acme.*

". . . a long poem that has been read by more Americans than anything comparable."

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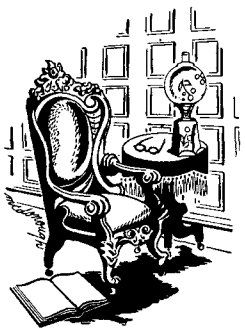
altogether un-epic enclaves in a narrative poem. They also contribute heavily to the variability of tone and style that characterizes "John Brown's Body" and, more than any other factor, prevents its being called a true epic. The genre is hard to define, and this review is evidently avoiding a definition, but surely it may be said of all genuine epics that they have a single style, variable, to be sure, but within relatively narrow limits.

Another indisputable feature of genuine epic is that it gives us not only a large and national theme of struggle, in which nameless forces are at work and the impersonal and un-individualized group is fundamental, but also preeminent individuals. Homer, for example, gives us Greeks and Trojans, but he also gives us Achilles and Hector. Benét somehow misses both of these. He gives us some interesting characters: Sally Dupré and Wingate in the South, and in the North Jack Ellyat and a not fully realized Lincoln; in the West his most alive individual, Melora. But none of them has the stature of Andromache or Priam or Diomedes, not to mention Achilles. Benét likewise never makes armies come alive. Homer, in a succession of similes, puts more mass movement into his poem in thirty lines than Benét can do in as many pages.

Benét's narrative suffers from his having bitten off more than his Muse



could chew. He either forgot or disregarded the wisdom of Aristotle's remark that Homer was wise not to try to tell the whole story of the Trojan War. Benét might have made a better poem if he had singled out some incident in the Civil War, and had then made it significant by bringing in the right elements of background at relevant points. Instead he inflicts on us highly prosaic "history" and tactical analyses; not enough to make the war understandable to a person with no other knowledge of it; too much, if one have such knowledge.

When he is dealing with essentially romantic situations, such as that of Melora, or the effect of the war on Wingate Hall, Benét's narrative is excellent. It cannot, as, indeed, narrative poetry generally cannot, transcend the individual. He should have pondered well the successes and the failures of Addison's "Blenheim" before he attempted his own Gettysburg. Many have tried, and only Aeschylus has really done it right.

The late Twenties are not popularly thought of as a period of large and serious work. As the Forties verge toward extinction, those of us who, like the present reviewer, lived their formative years in those fabulous Twenties, now taking the inevitable backward look of middle age, may draw some satisfaction from the evidence provided by "John Brown's Body," that the Twenties were not so silly as some youngsters are pleased to assume.

And One Came Running

By Louise Townsend Nicholl

GEORGE WASHINGTON, Abraham Lincoln, and my father,
Their footsteps mingling here together
In the worn stone
Of Old St. Paul's, the oldest church;
In walk and porch
Footsteps fallen, leaves blown,
Merged together in the stone.

Three of them came, and one came running,
Over the stones which now lie sunning.
Battery up to The Central Park
My father was heir to Old New York.
He ran and searched it, east and west,
Looking for Greatness and Event,
And the place he said he liked the best
When he reached the age of seven or eight
Was Old St. Paul's where Washington went—
The Pew, the flags, the fabulous Date.
Hard to believe it was Washington!
A name and a period half divine:
Seventeen Hundred and Eighty-nine.

He was eleven in Sixty-one
And found St. Paul's high iron fence
The most auspicious perch to wait
For Lincoln the President to come
Down Broadway in an open carriage.
(Was he old enough to think of the marriage,
The timeless meetings of those who are Great,
Adding up to a Place, a sum?)
President Lincoln strange and tall,
He would sleep in the Astor House next door,
He would have a room on the second floor.
This was the greatest thing of all,
Event immediate, immense.

Washington, Lincoln, and my father,
These were the great men, the three Brothers,
And one of them saw one of the Others,
One of them on top of a fence
In the Old City,
Kept fresh the memory, intense
With shock of fierce adoring pity:
Always the tone of hush and awe,
"The homeliest man I ever saw,"
The look which showed that he was great,
Marked for extremity by Fate.

And that was all . . .
Till four years later he lay in State
Across Broadway in City Hall;
Sixty-five, and the boy fifteen,
Filled with the Greatness he had seen.
Footsteps fallen, leaves blown,
In the worn stone.
Three of them came, and one came running,
Here on the stones which now lie sunning.

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"DOPESTER." ". . . a made to request book . . . On the reputation built with those stories, Ben Ames Williams was, for years, considered one of the chief spokesmen for the State of Maine, and rereading them intensifies this impression. His Fraternity Village lives for his readers: the storekeeper, with his earnest assistant, the doctor, the neighboring farmers — and chief in our hearts, Chet McAusland, who introduced Ben Ames Williams to the woods and marshes and streams of his beloved countryside . . . all of them have that quality of reality, from the sense of authenticity of sights and sounds and feel of the village to the true story character in the things that happened, and the way the neighbors talked about them over Will Bissell's pot-bellied stove . . ."

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FIRST READER (writing about the book when still in the project stage). ". . . In connection with his work La Farge has been flown over nearly all the air routes of the world north, east, south and west. His background therefore should be a picture of our globe in the round, very much as it is seen by God and the migratory birds. This, with La Farge's gift for writing ought to make it a book of both distinction and saleability . . ."

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FIRST READER (*American Publisher*). "Balchin is one of the top novelists in England today . . . he knows the history of this period backward and forward and he has done a clever job in getting into Borgia's shoes, and cell . . . this is his most ambitious work, it is really solid and we should publish solidly."

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George J. Nathan and H. L. Mencken—"these two dragons were talking about wallpaper."

An Ill-Will Tour of the American Mind

LOUIS KRONENBERGER

Louis Kronenberger

AT A FIRST night a year or two ago I found myself seated in front of Mencken and Nathan; and thought how, had this happened twenty years before, I should have been half out of my seat to hear what those two dragons were talking about. And at once it struck me that I still would like to hear, so that I at once proceeded to eavesdrop. And what those two dragons were talking about, or rather what Mencken was talking to Nathan about, was—wallpaper.

Twenty years before, it would have been as great a shock to find Mencken talking of wallpaper as to find, say, Calvin Coolidge talking at all. But a year or so ago, though still an unlikely topic, wallpaper seemed a charming and not unsuitable one. For this once fiercest of dragons holding forth on the tamest of subjects had himself, with the passing of years, come to seem tame; had himself come to seem decorative. He might still, like a sort of old-fashioned fire engine, symbolize clangor and commotion, but he no longer could stir them up. In a sense he belonged so vividly to the past that he was compelled to exist less as a man than a memory.

Certainly no one just like him, either for personal bite or as cultural yeast, has quite arisen since. Since Mencken, no one with so keen an eye for the follies of American life has had also so sharp a tongue. Since Mencken, indeed, there has come about a sort of division or bifurcation of Mencken's labors, the neatly fenced critical highroad climbing toward the chill uplands of the Eliots, the journalistic lowroad dropping to the swampland of the Peglers. Mencken was superlatively the right man for the job, but he almost certainly arrived at the right moment. Not only did he open up shop with almost no competition from pollsters and syndicated critics and nationally hooked-up commentators: even more, in the years following World War I, he had for customers Americans with a lot of newly acquired money and emotions—Americans who wanted to reach out rather than dig for culture, to overturn rather than investigate morality; who desired to feel superior in ten lessons; who craved, above all, to be amused while being instructed. Mencken, between what he was born with in the way of style and personality, and what he borrowed from a Nietzsche or a Huneker or a Shaw, could offer, at will, considerable food for thought, unlimited opportunities for laughter. Hence in no time a vast number of people were following him with delight, while (what proved even better for business) a vast number of others were recoiling from him in horror.

It was an extraordinary show that he put on, in issue after issue of *The Smart Set,* in volume after volume of "Prejudices." And it was also a vigorous crusade—or at any rate crusade-in-reverse; for of course Mencken had come not so much to win recruits as deserters; had contrived to make every American *less* pious, less patriotic, less proud of his heritage; to insist that almost without exception newspapers distort and books misinform; that professors are pedants, politicians are crooks, doctors quacks, preachers hypocritical time-servers, farmers puritanical oafs; that the American picture of things doesn't exist and democracy doesn't work. Mencken did not pretend to know, or attempt to find out, the remedy: at reform he not merely threw up his hands but wrinkled his nose. The wise course was to stand apart and survey so grotesque and degraded a scene with faintly rueful amusement. Let the few superior souls—and the reader was always made to feel he was one of them—enjoy what satisfactions they could in their role of the civilized minority.

Always a fine gaudy exhibit and often a scorching indictment, Mencken's operation covered enormous ground—became a kind of Ill-Will Tour of the American mind. To be sure, it so much disparaged the sights that you might have imagined it discouraged the sightseeing; but no, it merely set forth the right irreverent terms for travel. And though, in conducting the tour, Mencken relied chiefly on picturesque abuse, he was by no means lacking in acumen. He introduced a great many plausible comments, he let fall a whole lot of home-hitting cracks, and now and again

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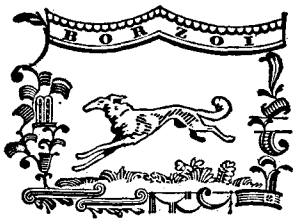

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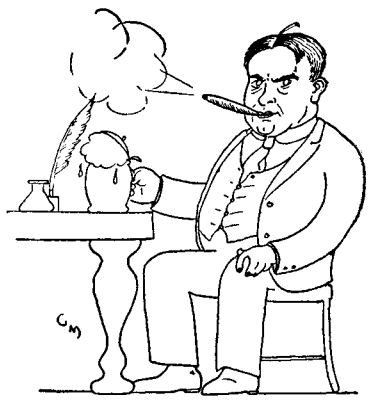
A Mencken Contagium

—Ralph Barton, Bettmann Archive.



—Gene Markey.

Cartoonists quickly realized that with Mencken the undistilled bever's the thing.

—Miguel Covarrubias.

—Scheel, Bettmann Archive.

Another favorite theme of cartoonists was Mencken's rolled dry lanceolate leaves.

spoke such genuine wisdom as "Injustice is relatively easy to bear; what stings is justice."

From out all this, moreover, there emerge solid and even definitive things—and not simply such things as the valuable spadework for Dreiser or the wonderful obit of Bryan. On a much larger scale, Mencken laid on the counter the whole stock-in-trade of our culture; caused us to test the quality and examine the price-tags on everything displayed. America was in a mood to change, and would have changed with Mencken or without him. All the same, he more than any one else made America conscious and hence critical of itself; he more than any one else, despite his own trick photography, revealed the face of America minus the false whiskers and the hair dye. He made plain that charlatanry was America's leading profession; that to the Puritan, nothing is pure; that a democracy is at times a mob and freedom of expression at times a misfortune. He exposed half our national heroes; and orated about them as they died off, much less as though they were being mourned in death than tried for murder. In his debunking, Mencken revealed a gimlet eye for the pretentious, the counterfeit, the absurd; no one has shown up quackery with keener relish or more notable results. And for doing all this, Mencken had a brilliantly right style—vivid, daring, now and then bullying, and always a little unscrupulous. Though his method, with its pile-up of "learned" examples and irrelevancies, is journalistic and expansive, the prose itself is compact. The vocabulary is large and resourceful, even though the most trademarked parts of it—the "Rev. Dr.," the "bos taurus," the synonyms for twaddle—have naturally grown stale. But the Menckenisms can be picked off like burs from a coat, and the coat is good sturdy worsted still, and far from threadbare. And the breezy showmanship, the brazen circus air, plainly saved the crusader-in-reverse from becoming a yapping bore or common scold: although, following Mencken's lead in never taking anything quite seriously, most readers never took Mencken himself so. He never built or even blueprinted anything of much value; he was simply the accomplished and enthusiastic foreman of a wrecking crew—and *what* a crew, as Sinclair Lewis and others came to join it. Far less can be said for Mencken as a sort of rough-and-ready arbiter elegantiarum. He made the mistake of whooping up the Cabells and the Hergesheimers, who had themselves made the mistake of becoming sophisticated without becoming fully mature; though it was much more, I think, their point of view than their dainty ways that Mencken found congenial. He himself typified not French wines but good German beer; a rowdy masculine gaiety with more nose-thumbing than eyebrow-raising to it; a ribaldry as much of the body as the mind; an attitude in which the knowledge that All Is Vanity was mingled with the principle that Nothing Is Sacred; an impulse not so much to face life as make faces at it: such was Mencken during the Twenties when his stock, like so very many others, hit its all-time high.

NOW, with the publication of a sort of hefty Mencken carry-all* we can hardly not inquire where that stock stands today. The new volume, with its quarter million words taken from Mencken's shelf-full of out-of-print books, is a sound and varied selection that still makes lively reading. Reading it, you perhaps more quickly seize the chance to relive an era, to raise people and ideas from the dead and

*A MENCKEN CHRESTOMATHY. Edited and Annotated by the Author. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. 627 pp. $5.

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Outstanding Books of the Current Season on the Dutton List

In the past 25 years, the Saturday Review of Literature has brought to the attention of the book-loving public many excellent works. Among these have been dozens of DUTTON books, well loved and still popular. These are only a few of the many that the S.R.L. has helped to make known.

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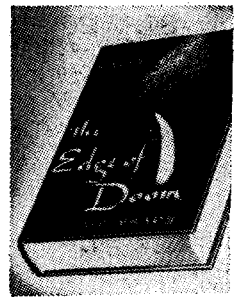

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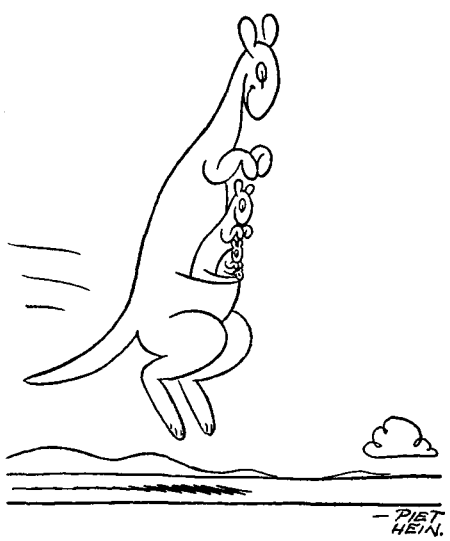
the dustheap, than to revaluate Mencken. Yet all this may well affect our revaluation, in the sense that, having flourished as a critic and satirist of the period, Mencken may preeminently survive as its memorialist. Doubtless Mencken's greatest monument will be in the field where he himself has displayed the greatest talent—the field of language. "The American Language" and its two "Supplements" (not drawn upon here because all three are in print) are much his solidest work. He might, I think, have done better by relying less on communications sent to Hollins Street and going oftener where the American language holds sway; and at times he assigns too much weight to obvious nonce-words or facetious coinages. But he has consolidated an immense amount of material with great care and skill, while all the time providing the sprightliest of reading matter.

ABOUT life he has been less exacting than about language; particularly as critic. His judicial sessions are enjoyable courtroom comedies enough, but we far too often not simply quarrel with Mencken's verdicts; we distrust the evidence. For like most journalists and virtually all jesters, Mencken maneuvered and embroidered, unduly limelighted or unfairly veiled the facts. To keep the show going, he not only became more and more of a ham, but cared less and less about who sat in the audience. And his tone, of course, could be enormously misleading.

It was not so much that, employing the methods of a bomb-thrower, he half-concealed the prejudices of a Bourbon; nor so much, again, that he was almost as leery of anything newfangled as he was scornful of anything old. What was much shoddier is that while so skeptical in theory, in practice he was always so knowing; inscribing *Que sçais-je?* on his shield, slamming out Q.E.D. with his pen; and indeed going on from being opinionated, as he ought to have been, to suggesting omniscience, as no man ought.

As a campaigner he was of incalculable value. In the vital sense, he both launched and led the fight against Puritanism and gentility; he really cried down snoopers and bluenoses and lavender-and-old-lacers, and spoke up for (and printed) those who dissented and protested and pioneered. And for doing this he must always have an important place in the development of our culture. In the end, however, his represents a campaign for freedom of speech rather than real excellence of writing. For so soon as something not immediate but ultimate was at stake, he might all too readily misapprehend and betray. In the end, of what use was it to oust Hopkinson Smith in favor of E. W. Howe, if he could suppose that Henry James "would have been vastly improved as a novelist by a few whiffs from the Chicago stockyards" (no doubt Blake should have joined a country club); if he could blandly link Jane Austen with Hannah More; if he could adjudge Dr. Johnson "the first Rotarian." As for music, a field to which he devotes more space in the "Chrestomathy" than to quackery or morals, he can speak with a sneer of the nineteenth century producing "a whole horde of Tchaikowskys . . . Debussys . . . Verdis" (how nice if it had!); can refer to the "naive idiom" of Mozart (the finale of "Figaro," shall we say?); can remark of Haydn in relation to Beethoven that it is "like pitting a gazelle against a bull" (a good moment to remember Swinburne's separating the great in art into gods and giants). Mencken had, besides—like so many of his fellow-critics since—the need, in raising one thing up, to pull another down: thus praise of "Heart of Darkness" requires condemnation of "King Lear." And like so many of his fellow-scoffers, Strachey for instance, when Mencken *doesn't* scoff he is terribly likely to gush.

The truth is that, in his tastes and his esthetics alike, Mencken was often glaringly philistine. Art, in the purest sense, fed nothing in his nature and wholly eluded his grasp; at times he seems to suggest that the "sanity" of art is much the same as commonsense. But at least one great trouble with his criticism is that he wouldn't confine it to what really interested or affected him, that he felt called upon to express an opinion about everything—so that many of his snidest judgments are largely snap judgments, and he is most intolerant when least informed. All this left its mark; Mencken helped father the manysided, encyclopedic commentator of today—the type that professing doubt, serves up dogma, and setting forth to expose other people, reveals the bluffer in himself.



Nor is Mencken's thinking measurably superior to his taste. His exalting Junkerdom at the expense of democracy; his denunciation of things like birth control and universal education; his defense of things like capital punishment and war, label him an almost cantankerous reactionary. The real point of it, indeed, is less how reactionary Mencken proved to be than how responsible. He was very largely irresponsible; he must stand condemned not for being a pessimist about progress but for being a cynic; not for being glum about the incorrigible blunderings of mankind but for being, all too often, gleeful. Civilized minorities are all very well; but they have, or should have, work to do. The aristocracies that thoughtful conservatives like Burke have believed in, were to legislate and labor quite strenuously for the good of others; they were to be the chief actors in a very weighty drama. Mencken's fine folk were only to be spectators at a loutish farce—which, it was surely on the cards, would become either too monotonous to endure or too obstreperous to control. After 1929, in any case, it played to empty houses.

NOT unnaturally, Mencken was slain in his own crusade. He pointed the way to something better than himself; he was not the big city, he was only the train that took you there. But if only briefly instructive, he was for the longest time enjoyable; and if he perished quickly as a god, for years and years he persisted as the devil. Actually the hate he aroused was one of his best achievements; whatever else, he could always be proud of his enemies. There is some virtue, too, in the fact that one was liberated from benighted dogmas without becoming enslaved all over again to Mencken; the danger with greater liberators is just such an enslavement.

Though Mencken sinfully abused his role, the role itself was culturally a needed one. Something is gained when a man writes pungently and powerfully enough to interest *every* class of reader; something is gained, again, when a man raises all the right questions, whether or not he returns the wrong answers. Mencken's real function was not to shed light but remove dust. Even so, he did help tear down a few dangerously obstructive walls before turning his attention to wallpaper.

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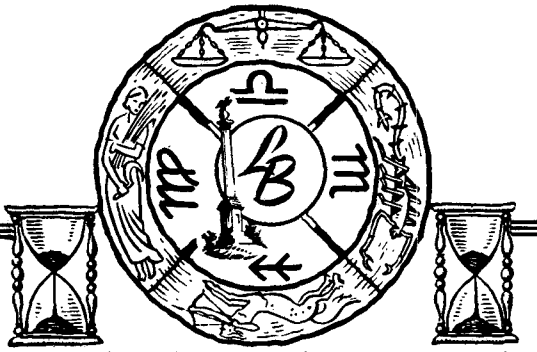

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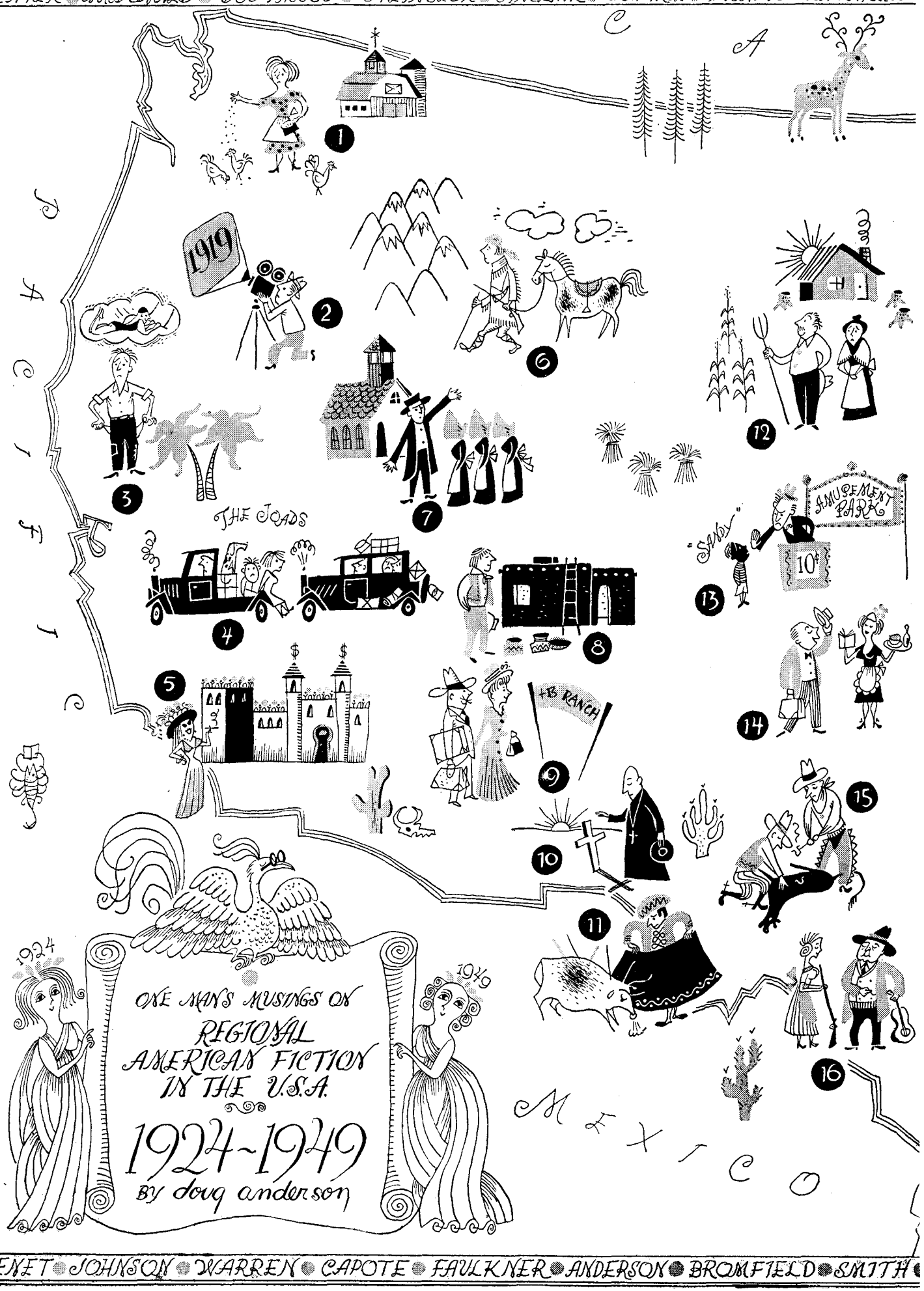

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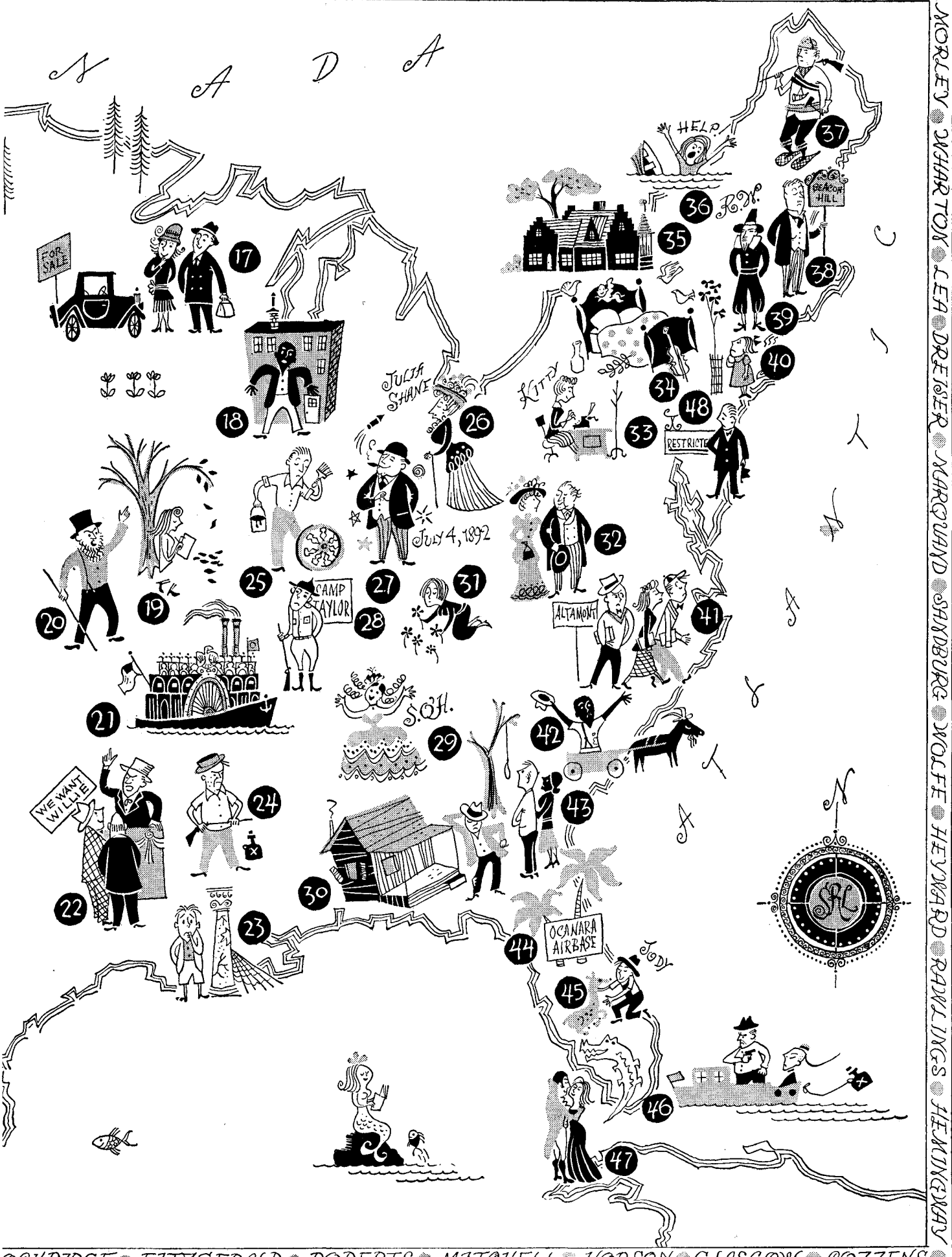

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Key to Regional American Fiction Map on Previous Pages

KEY NO.	NAME OF BOOK	AUTHOR'S NAME	YEAR
1.	The Egg and I	Betty MacDonald	1945
2.	1919	John Dos Passos	1932
3.	The Daring Young Man on the Flying Trapeze	William Saroyan	1937
4.	The Grapes of Wrath	John Steinbeck	1939
5.	A World to Win	Upton Sinclair	1946
6.	The Big Sky	A. B. Guthrie, Jr.	1947
7.	Children of God	Vardis Fisher	1939
8.	Laughing Boy	Oliver La Farge	1929
9.	Sea of Grass	Conrad Richter	1937
10.	Death Comes for the Archbishop	Willa Cather	1927
11.	The Brave Bulls	Tom Lea	1949
12.	Giants in the Earth	Ole Edvart Rolvaag	1927
13.	Not Without Laughter	Langston Hughes	1930
14.	Heaven's My Destination	Thornton Wilder	1935
15.	A Vaquero of the Brush Country	J. Frank Dobie	1929
16.	Flowering Judas	Katherine Anne Porter	1930
17.	Arrowsmith	Sinclair Lewis	1925
18.	Native Son	Richard Wright	1940
19.	Now in November	Josephine Johnson	1934
20.	John Brown's Body	Stephen Vincent Benét	1929
21.	Showboat	Edna Ferber	1926
22.	All the King's Men	Robert Penn Warren	1946
23.	Other Voices, Other Rooms	Truman Capote	1948
24.	Sanctuary	William Faulkner	1931
25.	Dark Laughter	Sherwood Anderson	1925
26.	The Green Bay Tree	Louis Bromfield	1924
27.	Raintree County	Ross Lockridge, Jr.	1948
28.	The Great Gatsby	F. Scott Fitzgerald	1925
29.	Gone with the Wind	Margaret Mitchell	1936
30.	Tobacco Road	Erskine Caldwell	1932
31.	The Time of Man	Elizabeth Madox Roberts	1926
32.	The Romantic Comedians	Ellen Glasgow	1926
33.	Kitty Foyle	Christopher Morley	1939
34.	One More Spring	Robert Nathan	1933
35.	Hudson River Bracketed	Edith Wharton	1929
36.	An American Tragedy	Theodore Dreiser	1926
37.	Northwest Passage	Kenneth Roberts	1937
38.	The Late George Apley	John P. Marquand	1937
39.	Remembrance Rock	Carl Sandburg	1948
40.	A Tree Grows in Brooklyn	Betty Smith	1943
41.	Look Homeward, Angel	Thomas Wolfe	1929
42.	Porgy	DuBose Heyward	1925
43.	Strange Fruit	Lillian Smith	1944
44.	Guard of Honor	James Gould Cozzens	1948
45.	The Yearling	Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings	1938
46.	To Have and Have Not	Ernest Hemingway	1937
47.	Anthony Adverse	Hervey Allen	1933
48.	Gentleman's Agreement	Laura Z. Hobson	1947

Remembering the Poets

A Reviewer's Vista

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

MY bookshelves in New York bear witness that it is now nearly thirty years since I began reviewing poetry, first for the predecessor of this journal, which was the old *Literary Review* of the *New York Evening Post*. Within the space I have here I could not possibly mention all the books I liked best in that time or all the poets who seemed to me to have promise, even though some never fulfilled it. I can only present certain instances and milestones from my memory, to illustrate what important changes were taking place in the last quarter century, and the instances will certainly not cover everything.

One matter we took for granted as late as twenty-odd years ago was what is loosely termed the "music" of poetry. We had progressed, to be sure, from metrical patterns into free verse, polyrhythmics, and polyphonic prose, but much poetry still had a lilt, a swing, a more rapid pace than prose. Today the most "modern" poetry has fallen into, at best, a stately walk. Far from dancing, it does not desire any regular rhythm. Nor does it desire to present clear and completed images. The kind of picture it forms in the mind has more in common with the patterns seen in a kaleidoscope, except that they lack the symmetry of those patterns. The clear image has become a profusion of incongruous images. Words are often used without any attention to their precise meaning or to their history, but merely for their suggestibility; and method has become so inept that the main intention seems to be to excel in a clash of connotations. Also, anything can become a symbol. Having little learning, most young poets care nothing for the deeply rooted and richly fecund symbolism of the world's myths and religions. They prefer to startle with expressions that explode all grammar and syntax. The genius is the one who can think of the most hair-raising juxtapositions of words.

Having said so much, I shall say no more. I have seen various kinds of poetry flourish and go to seed. I have observed much experiment, frequently excruciating. I have seen certain ones elevated to excessive pedestals and others defamed. I have seen some rare and delicate work comparatively neglected and some honest and expressive work scorned in favor of the more epileptoid. But I have also read much vigorous and genuine poetry.

A quarter of a century ago Robert Frost had won his first Pulitzer Prize for "New Hampshire." Edwin Arlington Robinson, whose "Collected Poems" had already appeared and received the same award, followed Frost in 1925 with the prize for "The Man Who Died Twice," though the "Tristram" which made him famous to the generality was still in the womb of time. Carl Sandburg's "Selected Poems" came in 1926, as did the first volumes of his Lincoln biography, "The Prairie Years." Vachel Lindsay had written his best work before 1920, and was well-known on the lecture platform. "The Spoon River Anthology," of Edgar Lee Masters, was nine years old, and "The New Spoon River" just published. I shall not comment further upon these acknowledged leaders in American poetry, with whose separate and distinct styles the readers of this journal are thoroughly familiar.

Recently the *SRL* has spread upon its pages much discussion of the poet Ezra Pound and the poet T. S. Eliot [June 11, June 18, July 2]. Both have written distinguished verse, and nothing is more distasteful to me than a hue-and-cry (particularly when a man is in serious difficulty), but I find that some twenty years ago I was discussing Pound and Eliot as follows:

> When the eminent talk twaddle it is irritating. . . . Mr. T. S. Eliot has lately been doing so in his remarks on Ezra Pound in the *Dial*. What he says of Pound's "art of verse" is to my own mind exaggerated; but every man has a right to his opinion. . . . He also says that Pound "has an exquisite sense of humor, and his epistolary style is masterly." Further on I shall give an example of both which has just come in the mail. What really pleases me in the letter is Pound's well-known and never-

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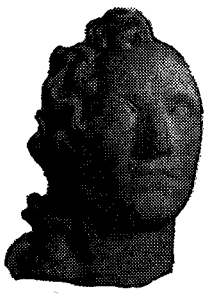
Wonderful reading for this-or any other-year

Weit, hoch, herrlich der Blick



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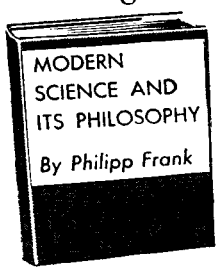

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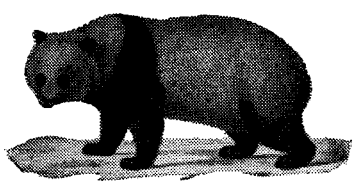
The man who discovered the giant panda



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failing generosity toward and championship of lesser writers whom he feels to be underrated. . . . However, what I started to point out was that Mr. Eliot eventually begins to talk nonsense. Thus:

> As for the meaning of the *Cantos*, that never worries me, and I do not believe that I care. I know that Pound has a scheme and a kind of philosophy behind it; it is enough for me that he thinks he knows what he is doing; I am glad that the philosophy is there, but I am not interested in it.
>
> This brings us to the second problem about Pound. I confess that I am seldom interested in what he is saying, but only in the way he says it. That does not mean that he is saying nothing; for ways of saying nothing are not interesting. Swinburne's form is uninteresting, because he is literally saying next to nothing, and unless you mean something with your words they will do nothing for you.

At the time, I called this "egregious." Today it still seems to me an irresponsible and contradictory sort of comment. I called it then "loose, lazy thinking solemnly expressed," and wished that the old vitriolic Swinburne were alive "to write another 'Seven Against Sense' and prick this bubble of 'Isolated Superiority'." As for Pound's letter from Rapallo, he was taking up the cudgels for one Robert McAlmon and wanted to know "why the HELL can't some bloody amurkn publisher git round to printing his stuff." [I had called attention to McAlmon's work.] With what Eliot had termed his "exquisite sense of humor," Pound challenged, "You people live in the country, the surrounding stupidity OUGHT to annoy you near to worse than it does me at a distance. Licherchoor either sugared or spiced." There was more presumably cracker-barrel lingo of that kind. I do not mean to imply that Pound had no reason for his spleen. Toleration of the arts has advanced a bit since then; not a great deal, but a little. But the inner circle of the elect was already intrenching itself. The situation is, of course, as old as the arts. The worm at its core, however, was the *not caring about meaning!*

In 1922 I wrote a review of "The Undertaker's Garland," by John Peale Bishop and Edmund Wilson. I said "a questioning mind [Wilson] and a burning imagination [Bishop] present to us a unique necrology, with romantic energy, with grim realism, with clever satire and extravaganza." Their forms and methods were nothing new. But they were young then, and I much younger certainly than I am today! Today the poetry of the late John Peale Bishop, a highly cultivated man, has the approval of the more antiseptic critics—which does not mean that it did not greatly improve and is not a pleasure to read. Bishop was a real poet, as, of course, Wilson is a real critic.

In 1925 died a poet and promoter of American poetry who was a power in her time, and whose neglect of late seems to underscore the fact that those who have been fighters exuberant and feared must endure for a while eclipse by lesser talents. I said then:

> She ransacked all epochs. She adapted from the Chinese and Japanese. She ran the gamut of onomatopoeia, adventured in every possible effect of rhythm, and created many new patterns of verse. She spread her palette with rainbow-color, and juxtaposed hue and hue with spectacular brilliance.

I SEE no reason for retraction of that today. And if Amy Lowell was a favorite of fortune, she was also a firm friend and a frank opponent, and beneath occasional abruptness and belligerency she had warm kindness of heart and hatred of sham. She hated, I said, "sham in every form, sham emotion, sham esthetics, sham scholarship, sham opinions." "She lived," I said, "in a clean, clear world of the mind, rejoicing in the exercise of an unusual taste and an unusual intelligence." Nor, I think, does *that* call for retraction. Everyone who knew her knew her weaknesses, her faults. She hid nothing. But she came into American poetry like a high wind. She had something the present age seems quite to have lost, *joie de vivre*.

It was the November prior to that year that George Sterling wrote me from California that the poem "Tamar" by Robinson Jeffers was "surely the most *terrible* poem in English. 'The Cenci' is nothing to it." He told me that Jeffers was then living on Mission Point near Carmel in a beautiful stone house with a stone tower of his own building. There he still lives, and he has since written many other poems of terror and tragedy, becoming, to my own regret, our great and savage misanthrope of American poetry. But neither he nor the eupeptic Amy Lowell were half-hearted in their art!

At the same time that remarkable printer Shmuel bar Aiwass bie Yaqubh Murad de Shirabode (which he had Americanized to Samuel A. Jacobs—and how glad I am to pay tribute here to a fine craftsman and a man of generous heart!) was setting up "Tulips and Chimneys," by e. e. cummings, down on Warren Street in New York; and in a certain all-night eating place near City Hall Square he would read a correspondent of mine, Hafiz, in the original. "Hafiz is very much like cummings," he would explain, "and D. H. Lawrence is more like Sadi. Hafiz never used the same form for two poems, and he didn't use any of the conventional forms of the day. He played the same pranks with Persian that cummings does with English, for the same reason."

It was in 1927, in early spring, that I heard Edna St. Vincent Millay and Elinor Wylie discuss the poetry of the late George O'Neil, in a comfortable old farmhouse in the northernmost part of York State. The book was "The White Rooster," and I shall never

—*Reprinted from* SRL, *Aug. 14, 1943.*

"No, he's not writing a book. He's holding up his end of a literary feud that began in 1903."

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SPOKESMEN FOR GOD
by Edith Hamilton.

THE COMMERCE OF NATIONS
by J. B. Condliffe.

THE STAKES OF DEMOCRACY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA
by Dr. H. J. van Mook.

MASTERPIECES OF MUSIC BEFORE 1750
Edited by Carl Parrish and John F. Ohl.

SOURCE READINGS IN MUSIC HISTORY
Edited by Oliver Strunk.

YANKEE'S WANDER WORLD
by Irving and Electa Johnson.

CALL OF THE WIND
by Ian G. Gilchrist.

NAVIGATION THE EASY WAY
by Carl D. Lane and John Montgomery.

THE HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN SAILING NAVY
by Howard I. Chapelle.

SHAKESPEARE'S WORLD OF IMAGES
by Donald Stauffer.

NOTEBOOKS OF MALTE LAURIDS BRIGGE
by Rainer Maria Rilke.

RILKE AND BENVENUTA
by Magda von Hattingberg.

A SHORT HISTORY OF SCIENCE AND SCIENTIFIC THOUGHT
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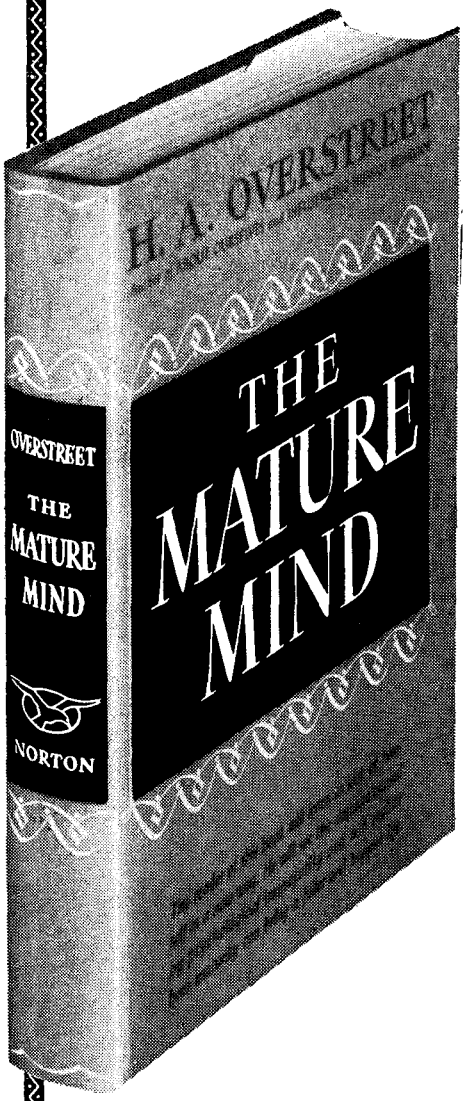
Author of ABOUT OURSELVES and INFLUENCING HUMAN BEHAVIOR



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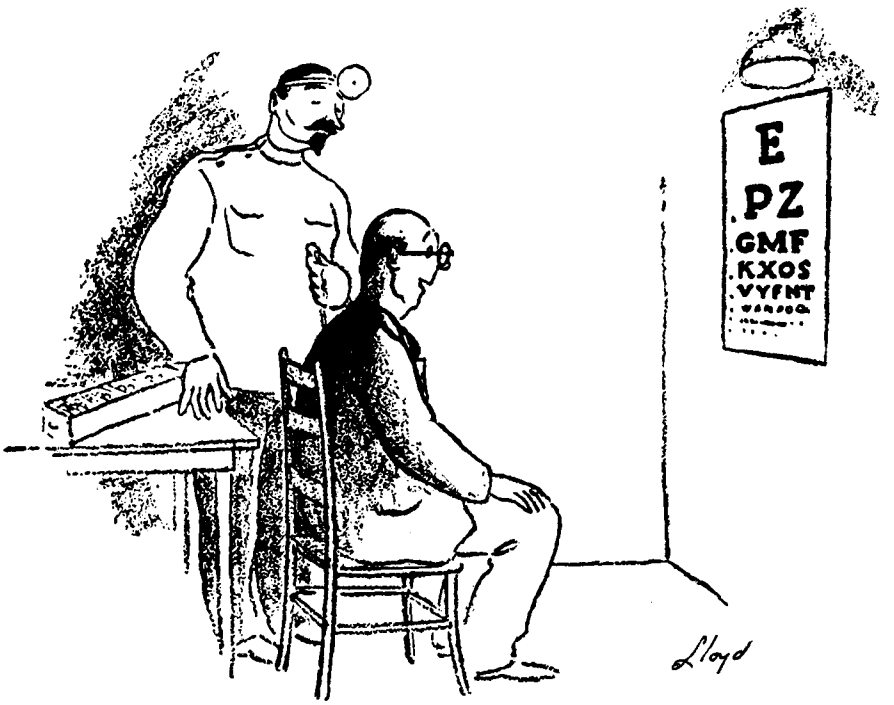

—*Reprinted from "Laughs from* The Saturday Review of Literature."

"Well, offhand, I'd say it was something by Ezra Pound."

forget the ominousness with which Elinor pronounced the line from "Inlander," "You move in mortal peril," nor Vincent reading in her beautiful histrionic voice:

The hound that runs alone
Has turned himself to stone.
The urns upon the wall
That let the water fall
Have whispered, dripped, desisted.
The basin that was wide
Has narrowed on a side,
The marble edge has twisted.

I dare say we have produced more good women poets than any other country. "H. D.," still an exile, remained then the prime imagist, her work being scrupulous in the extreme.

And then an age seemed to end when Thomas Hardy died at Max Gate at the start of the year 1928. "Just prior to the Great War," as I wrote then, "he was writing better lyrical poetry than the young Georgians."

In March of that year I had occasion to commend a book of poems especially interesting in view of the subsequent autobiographical triumphs of the author and the recent visit to America of the author and his sister who is now the idol of the critics. "As a poet his sister Edith (to whom the present volume is beautifully dedicated) has excelled her two brothers, various and original as their poetry has been. But with 'England Reclaimed' Osbert Sitwell suddenly comes to the fore in the friendly family tourney." Sacheverell Sitwell's "Doctor Donne and Gargantua" was another book I liked.

Hardy's death had left William Butler Yeats, of Ireland, as the greatest poet in the British Isles, and we now climbed his symbolic tower by a winding stair. "The Tower" opened with "Sailing to Byzantium" (one of the poems over which all modern criticism goes into convulsions of adulation) and contained the even better "Leda and the Swan." Yeats's "Responsibilities" I rate very high. He was more entirely the poet than any man of our time.

Hart Crane's "The Bridge" in 1930 seemed to me a fascinating poem, though I demurred at haphazard organization, and at phraseology "that often clots against all sense." It was a trifle earlier that, in tackling the same poet's "White Buildings," considered with the most intense respect by Edmund Wilson in *The New Republic,* I found a new element in poetry to which I myself could not accord that tribute:

From charred and riven stakes, O
Dionysus, Thy
Unmangled target smile

started the depression for me, and "Thy Nazarene and tinder eyes" deepened the gloom.

This coming winter will be twenty years ago exactly since *The Modern Quarterly* debated "The Revolution of the Word." James Joyce in "Work in Progress" had been doing all sorts of things with words. Here was a highly esoteric pleasure—forecasting another trend in modern poetry. Eugene Jolas was saying that "the isolated vocable should develop a new sense of conjuration," with which I agreed within reason, but V. F. Calverton had a good word also to say:

> Any revolution in the word, therefore, if it is to mark an advance, has but one function to perform, and that is to make the word a finer because a more precise and clarifying form of social communication.

He added that because "we are done with an old culture does not mean we are done with old words." But soon enough the cry from Paris of the avant'garde was that they completely renounced "communication" as hopelessly "bourgeois."

An English poet I have always thought underrated is the late Laurence Binyon, whose "Collected Poems" in two volumes came out in the early Thirties. The camarilla disdain him, but I find the great accent in

Time, Time who choosest
All in the end well;
Who severely refusest
Fames upon trumpets blown
Loud for a day, and alone
Makest truth to excel:

—and also a hint to contemporaries!

At the start of 1932 I called attention to a small book called "Poetry," by John Masefield, a lecture originally given at Queen's Hall, London. Here was one who had been a distinguished practitioner of an art which has always admittedly possessed an unfathomable element, saying something that seemed to me of great importance, though scarcely noticed:

> This Life upon this Planet, and this Planet herself are parts or shadows or roots of something intenser and greater. We who are mortals are only partially incarnate, partially sentient, partially spiritual.
>
> But invisibly, very near us, touching us all, is a real world, of divine order and beauty, inhabited by spirits, whose mission it is to bring order and beauty, where they can, to mortal souls who are struggling for such things; and remote as this world is in so many ways, its messengers are constant and its center is everywhere. The life of that world is all ecstasy of understanding, it is all that instant perception and lasting rapture which we know as poetry.

In that same month four white paper-bound volumes boxed together held the complete poetical works of a Paris poet, Harry Crosby, worshipper of the sun, unfortunate suicide, but notable enough to have D. H. Lawrence, T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, and Stuart Gilbert write introductions for his four books. Lawrence, though praising him for other things, found "no obvious incantation of sweet noise," an Elizabethan phrase! But he felt he had made the attempt Lawrence applauded in poets, to break through the false world man lives in to the exciting chaos outside that so scares him. Eliot, to my mind, indulged again a seemingly innate "hedging." In his first sentences he doubted "whether we can ever understand the poetry of

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1. Plato
2. St. Thomas Aquinas
3. Machiavelli
4. Karl Marx
5. Rousseau
6. Shakespeare
7. Adam Smith
8. Tawney
9. Homer
10. Swift
11. Nietzsche
12. Voltaire
13. Harvey
14. Rabelais
15. Aristotle
16. Darwin
17. Dostoyevsky
18. Hobbes
19. Pascal
20. Calvin
21. Descartes
22. James
23. Bacon
24. Lucretius
25. Thoreau
26. Montaigne
27. Sophocles

What's all this about great books?

( ) The Prince
( ) Odyssey
( ) Motion of the Heart
( ) Leviathan
( ) Apology for Raimond de Sebonde
( ) Institutes of the Christian Religion
( ) Beyond Good and Evil
( ) Oedipus Rex
( ) Republic
( ) Discourse on Method
( ) Candide
( ) Brothers Karamazov
( ) Wealth of Nations
( ) Social Contract
( ) Gulliver's Travels
( ) Summa Theologica
( ) Religion and the Rise of Capitalism
( ) Gargantua and Pantagruel
( ) Pragmatism
( ) De Rerum Natura
( ) Novum Organum
( ) Origin of Species
( ) Pensées
( ) Civil Disobedience
( ) Ethics
( ) Hamlet
( ) Communist Manifesto

ON the left appear the names of some of the authors studied under the Great Books Foundation program. On the right is a list of some of the selections studied. Some you will have already read (but how long ago?), many you will recognize, a few you may never have heard of. How many authors and titles can you match up?

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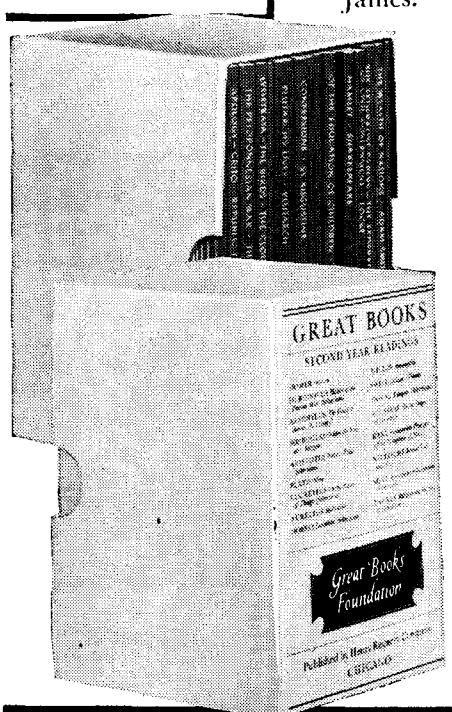

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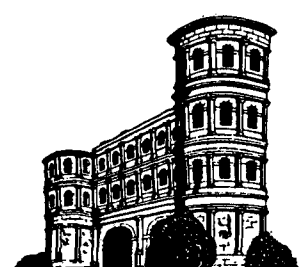

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a contemporary," which seemed to me no more than nonsense. He did not appear to know what Crosby had been up to, nor that he would like it if he did. "But 'liking'," he averred, "is itself irrelevant in a serious matter like poetry." I still do not know what that means. Yet so much distinguished commentary upon Crosby led me to musing:

> When this strange age is reviewed from some distant future, it will be a matter of astonishment that, for long in the realm of the arts, people were trying to find words to express what they thought about work which was also trying to find words to express what it thought. It was freely admitted that certain things were inferior works of art and yet of some tremendous significance—the significance, it turned out, that exists merely in a declared attitude toward life and in nothing that has been created out of that attitude. It was enough that one should stand for this or that, if it jibed with the theories of the intelligentsia. The matter of communicating anything had reached such a pass that the final dictum of the Left was that the artist need not communicate at all. A great deal was written concerning a great deal of writing which, it was freely admitted, was not understood by those who read it. This delightful madhouse sort-of-thing kept up for a good while. There were no Pentecostal tongues (to mix up scripture) in that Tower of Babel.

Meanwhile there was a lowly Italian laborer in New York City who had shown the true rhetorical spark, the "pick and shovel poet" Pascal d'Angelo. Macmillan published his book and Carl Van Doren and others commended it. His imagination had raised him from the ruck. But he fought against almost insurmountable obstacles and died in terrible privation. He was no fortunate youth. The *Brooklyn Eagle*—Walt Whitman's old paper—took up a subscription for his burial so that he might not rest in Potter's field. He had his true daemon; and he fell in bitter times of unemployment.

There was a second revised edition of "The New Poetry," edited by Harriet Monroe and Alice Corbin Henderson, a volume which earlier had introduced the best of the poets "discovered" by the magazine *Poetry*. In it, for an example, six poems by Lola Ridge were included, and fourteen by Miss Monroe, the same number she accorded to Edwin Arlington Robinson! There were five by Elinor Wylie and three by Stephen Vincent Benét. But Léonie Adams led off the book, and was really "new" in the best sense. One found here likewise Stanley J. Kunitz, a poet of genuine gist. I wonder (for I am writing from memory) whether one also discovered in it Horace Gregory, the younger poet who interested me most at that time and for long after. His "No Retreat" had been an improvement on his earlier "Chelsea Rooming House," and since then he has established himself as outstanding. He could write of John Skelton:

> the ragged adder's tongue,
> sharp, deep and venomous
> iron and mirth,
> then tart and ruddy song
> heard when spring's morning wakes
> April whose blossom shakes
> birds over earth.

At the time of which I write, Louise Bogan with "Dark Summer" and Léonie Adams with "High Falcon" were among the better new women poets, while Witter Bynner, Alfred Kreymborg, and Eunice Tietjens, with new books, reminded us that the earlier poets were still in the ring. I found in a new poet, Rolfe Humphries, "a personal idiom that is often effective." There was young George Dillon, too, with "The Flowering Stone," and Alan Porter with "The Signature of Pain." The latter was an American, Indiana born, though much praised in England. The following lines from "The Signature of Pain" may remind us of his almost forgotten distinction:

> Mortals, dismembered into time,
> conceive
> The motion of her presence fragmentary
> With generation, flowering, and decay.
> In her own royalty she is pure and
> constant,
> She is the fire that burns within the
> waters,
> Breathes, and by music of its breath
> creates
> Dancing and trembling in the elements.

A thorough study of Conrad Aiken's work was made by Houston Peterson in "The Melody of Chaos," which began to seem in other quarters like an apt description of much contemporary verse. Glenn Hughes assayed "Imagism and the Imagists" in one of the most complete appraisals of that vanguard group of earlier years. Henry Harrison down in Greenwich Village was being indefatigable in publishing poetry good, bad, and even worse.

With regard to the Revolution of the Word, Miss Elizabeth Drew in her "Discovering Poetry," one of the good books of that time, quoted from "Alice in Wonderland" most effectively:

> "The question is," said Alice, "whether you *can* make words mean so many different things."
> "The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "which is to be master—that's all."

The motto of which is, "Be sure that *you* are master!"

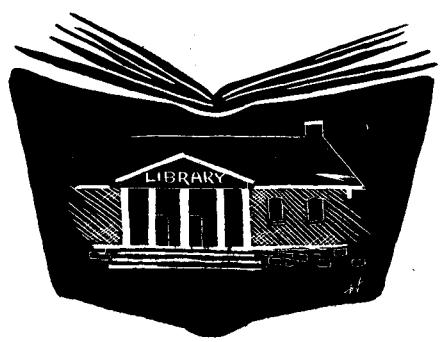
Lastly, to complete the tendencies and influences of the period now behind us, we have Michael Gold's attack upon Archibald MacLeish's "Frescoes for Mr. Rockefeller's City." Mr. Gold was then our leading literary Communist. He headed his review in *The New Republic* "Out of the Fascist Unconscious." A casual reference of Archie's to certain kinds of "Comrades" had so infuriated Gold that he lashed out:

> Hitler invokes the blond Aryans; Mussolini restores the eagles of Caesar; the awakened Magyars remember their forebear, Attila; and here is Archibald MacLeish using all the epic splendor of the American past, the red Indians, the pioneers, the railroad hunkies, and even the Rocky Mountains and the strong, savage American landscape as a political argument against sordid Marxists, Jews, and intellectuals!

I ventured mildly to object in the following strain:

> Hastily to draw the conclusion that a poet who has demonstrated the breadth of vision and sensitivity to the sufferings of the human race which are everywhere apparent in Mr. MacLeish's poetry is using that poetry for a paltry and ignoble purpose is, to say the least, most short-sighted. A poet, like anyone else, may question the efficacy of a certain definite political scheme. He may be right, he may be wrong, I do not believe that even greater mystical poets than Mr. MacLeish have been infallible, or omniscient. But it seems to me that Mr. Gold is claiming for the Communistic view of things an omniscience that it has not justified. Nor do I believe that he helps his cause by an essentially superficial attack upon the musings of one of the most cogently ironic poets of our time in America. . . . The trouble with Mr. Gold, flatly, is that he would have the poets turn propagandists for a particular political and economic thesis. If they refuse to do that, they are simply speaking out of turn and wasting his time. This ground has been gone over already by Mr. MacLeish himself, in prose, in his "Invocation to the Social Muse" which caused much controversy in the pages of *The New Republic*. So I shall not labor the point that if you reduce poets to propagandists you kill poetry deader than a door-nail.

That remains my attitude toward another aspect of modern poetry, although the emphasis has since shifted. The danger now is not propaganda, but desiccation. And so, with these observed indications of change, I leave you.



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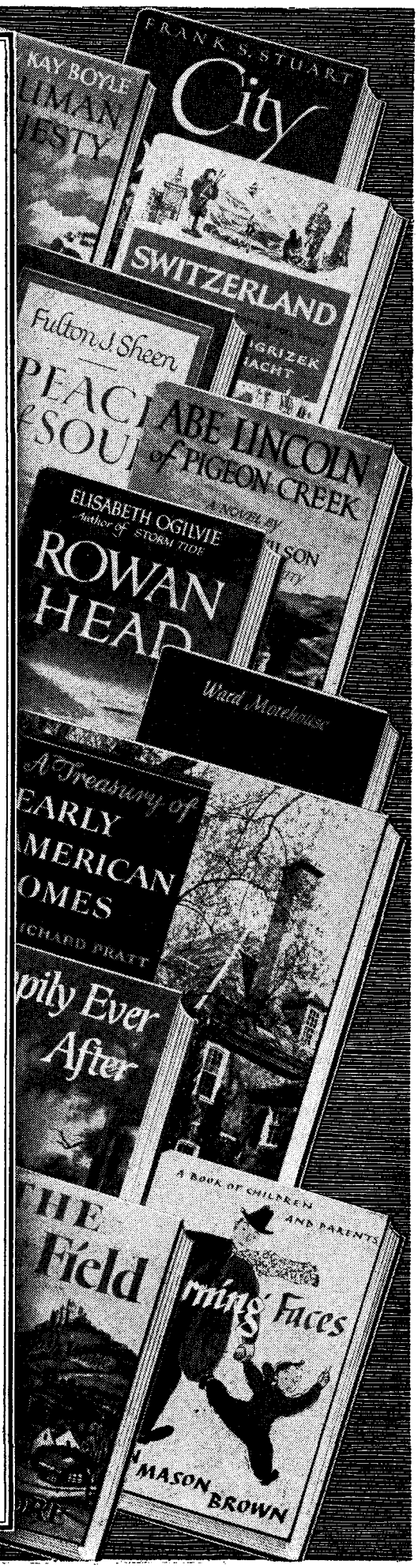

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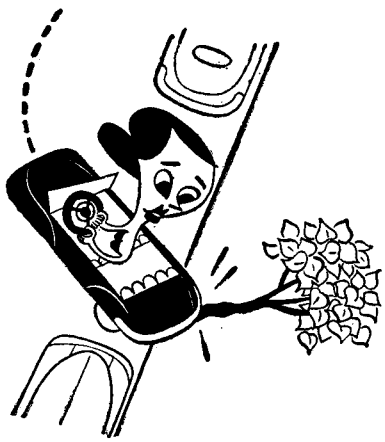
Translations from the Chinese

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

Galley Proof

NO SHO, the author,
Always methodical,
Used to make notes
Of publishing schedules.
But he quit when Mrs. No
Found on his desk
A chit of enigma.

How innocent was his memo:
Will have 30 gals next week
But Mrs. No wrote on it:
I think you exaggerate.



Lyric in a Parking Lot

Whether by day or after dark
A woman, when she tries to park,
Goes back and forth in the same arc.

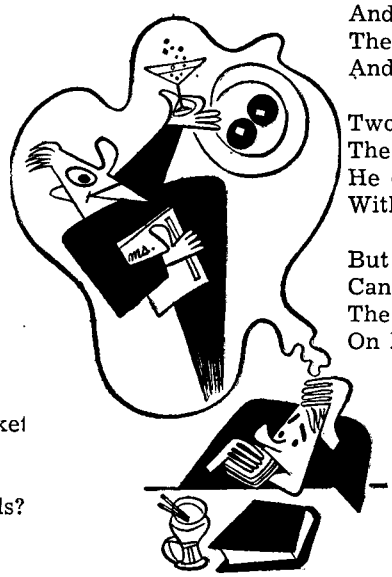
A woman parking at a roadhouse
Is funnier than P. G. Wodehouse

Advice from Pythagoras

When I was a bride, said the Duchess,
I didn't know (except for my husband)
One end of an animal from another.
But I had to learn
To do the marketing.

I went to the famous old Whangpoo Market
And humbly asked the butcher:
What would you recommend for dinner?
Liver? Kidneys? I've heard of sweetbreads?

Madam, said the austere butcher,
I never eat anything that has a function.



*Thoughts in a Garden**

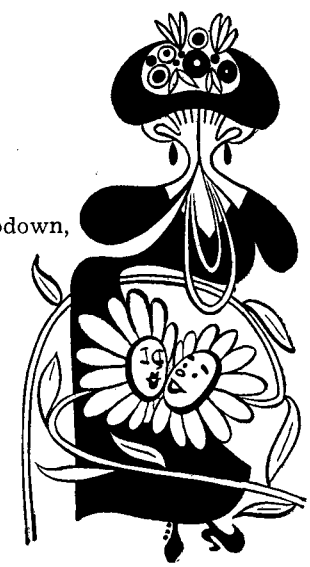
Old Philadelphia fogy
Logan Pearsall Smith,
Escorting some ladies
Round his garden in Sussex
Remarked with mischief, It's odd to remember
That flowers are only the reproductive organs
Of the plants they grow on.

"Oh, my *dear* Mr. *Smith,*" moaned Lady Sheepdown,
"You've ruined my garden for me.
I shall never be able to walk there
Without embarrassment."

As they left, after tea, in the village herdic,
The Honourable Mrs. Anchoice consoled her:
"What an *American* kind of thing to say."

I console myself too, the Old Mandarin cackles,
By thinking that authors
Are the reproductive organs of publishers.

*See "Afterthoughts," by Logan Pearsall Smith, 1931.



Promiscuity

My irises
Were royal purple
For many generations
Then suddenly some of them
Went mottled in lilac and cheesemould colors
With furry stigmas of carnal yellow.

What I know about you
Oh mixogamous bee.

"You Publishing Scoundrel"

—Henry James, *"The Aspern Papers"*

We followed the luxury lunchtime tradition
Of that famous publishing house
And while penciling proof
And planning strategy
The Editor ordered Eggs Benedict
And Champagne.

Two weeks after
The book was published
He ordered a sandwich
With malted milk.

But nobody, not even *Publishers' Weekly,*
Can take away from me
The six weeks I lunched
On Poached Eggs and Champagne.

Tales of a Grandfather

I.

The day after the new grandchild
(Pink as a Suffolk shrimp)
Arrived at Little Grange
The Old Mandarin telephoned the bank
For some new checkbooks.

The understanding Manager,
Himself a grandsire,
Replied: "I understand perfectly.
In the next mail, dear boy."

II.

Still, while you could only chirp,
And had no language but a burp,
I walked you on my loving shoulder.
You won't remember when you're older.

But listen, bubbleguts, to me:
About 2000 years A.D.
When you accomplish double-kin
You'll think of Gaffer Mandarin.

Crocodile in Tears

I love life, even in a hovel.
The only thought that makes me grovel
Is Being Put to Bed with a shovel.

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Mongolian Monody

Several people have thought of me
As a solution of their woes,
But only one, that I could see,
Might have made poetry of my prose.

By my zeal she was not tempted—
She had already been pre-empted.

Pour Prendre Conger

Of good friends gone we sometimes say
"I'm glad they went when they did;
If they could see us now
They couldn't bear it."

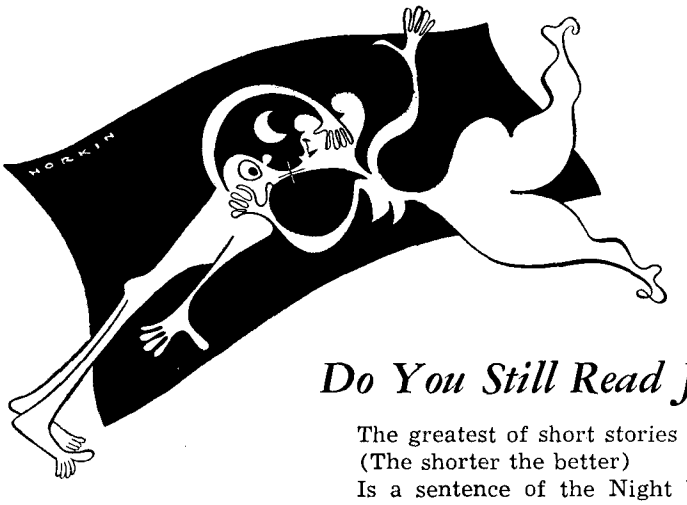
Say nothing like that about me.
Anything, even the Breakfast Programs,
Is worth bearing
Just to be alive.

I am not "reposing"
In Somebody's Funeral Home.
I am properly sore
I can't live forever.

Deleted from a Diary

If I had a wife, said Old Celibate,
She would have woman's natural craving
To be amused; and, frankly,
I am not always amusing.

All other kinds of pets,
From Generalissima to goldfish,
Amuse themselves.



Do You Still Read Jacobs?

The greatest of short stories
(The shorter the better)
Is a sentence of the Night Watchman
In one of the tales by W. W. Jacobs
(Copyright, I guess, by Scribner's):—

I saw two people saying goodbye;
One was a man,
And one wasn't.

Not Interesting Enough

In the Great March Blizzard
Some burgeoning high-school child
Telephoned: Her assignment was to interview
An Interesting Neighbor.
She thought I might do.

Certainly, sweetheart, replied the Old Mandarin,
If you'll come shovel the snow
Off my front drive.

He never heard from her again.

*Shaw, M. P. (Master of Publicity)**

Shaw, beset with questioning,
Put up a sign *No Trespassing.*

It didn't work, so he painted there
ORIGINAL THINKER—SO BEWARE!

That, said Shaw, will keep them away;
But it never did, by night or day.

The sign I invented was better than these;
It was more modest, and more polite.
It kept them away both day and night:—
MAN WORKING HERE. I THANK YOU. PLEASE!

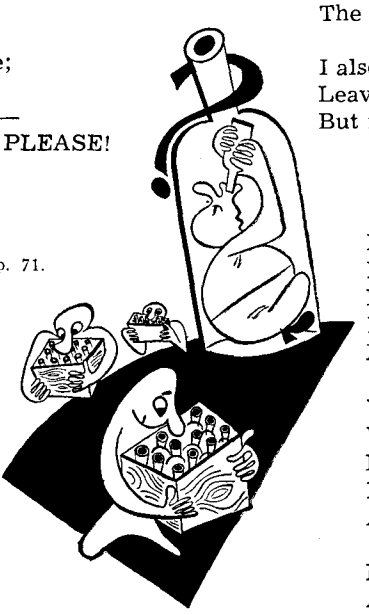
My publisher's wife was the only one
Who came to ask how I was getting on.

*See Stephen Winsten, "Days with Bernard Shaw," p. 71.

Too True

I'm glad, said the Old Mandarin,
The family aren't knowing
How much I have to drink of gin
To keep creation going.

Said Chancellor Mu Kow,
That experienced statesman:
Surely somebody has to carry out
The empty bottles?



The Bottom Button

Even under a rumplebagged Labour Government
Professional British diplomatists
Still leave unfastened
The bottom button of the waistcoat.
This, in an international conference,
Gives them something apparently casual to do
While scheming
The next argument.

I also, said the obese Old Mandarin,
Leave that button disengaged
But for a different reason.

Long Winter Nights

My diary, said the Old Mandarin,
Is a series of Editorials for Myself
Based on the news in the papers.
I write my keen and caustic comments
But I forget to note the proper credit.

Who, for instance, was the Harvard physicist
Who tuned in on the Music of the Spheres?
He said that in his microphone
It sounded like "gravel falling on the roof,
And the howling of wolves."

I thought about that all winter,
And heard them both.

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Here are some of the Scribner books which made publishing history during

THE SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE'S

first twenty-five years:

1924
FROM IMMIGRANT TO INVENTOR by Michael Pupin
(Pulitzer Prize winner)
THE WHITE MONKEY by John Galsworthy
HOW TO WRITE SHORT STORIES by Ring W. Lardner
THE DIARY OF A DUDE WRANGLER by Struthers Burt

•

1925
DRUMS by James Boyd
THE GREAT GATSBY by F. Scott Fitzgerald

•

1926
SMOKY by Will James
THE SUN ALSO RISES by Ernest Hemingway
THE BENSON MURDER CASE by S. S. Van Dine
(first of the Philo Vance series)
OUR TIMES by Mark Sullivan

•

1927
THE WORLD CRISIS by Winston S. Churchill
FROM 'GALLEGHER' TO 'THE DESERTER'
by Richard Harding Davis (collected stories)

•

1928
PETER PAN (the play) by James M. Barrie
MY AUTOBIOGRAPHY by Benito Mussolini

•

1929
A FAREWELL TO ARMS by Ernest Hemingway
LOOK HOMEWARD, ANGEL by Thomas Wolfe
SELECTED POEMS by Conrad Aiken (Pulitzer Prize winner)
THREE REFORMERS by Jacques Maritain

•

1930
THE COMING OF WAR: 1914 by Bernadotte E. Schmitt
(Pulitzer Prize winner)
MY LIFE by Leon Trotsky
GLOUCESTERMEN by J. M. Connolly

•

1931
AXEL'S CASTLE by Edmund Wilson
PENHALLY by Caroline Gordon

•

1932
THE STORY OF MY LIFE by Clarence Darrow
THE MARCH OF DEMOCRACY by James Truslow Adams

•

1933
MARLBOROUGH: HIS LIFE AND TIMES by Winston S. Churchill
CROWDED HOURS by Alice Roosevelt Longworth
THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS by Kenneth Grahame
(New edition illustrated by E. H. Shepard)

•

1934
R. E. LEE by Douglas Southall Freeman (Pulitzer Prize winner)
SO RED THE ROSE by Stark Young

•

1935
OF TIME AND THE RIVER by Thomas Wolfe
EUROPA by Robert Briffault
IDIOT'S DELIGHT by Robert E. Sherwood (Pulitzer Prize winner)

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1936

HEADS AND TALES by Malvina Hoffman
THE LAST PURITAN by George Santayana
THE SPIRIT OF MEDIEVAL PHILOSOPHY by Etienne Gilson

•

1937

CRUISE OF THE CONRAD by Alan Villiers
THE GOLDEN SOVEREIGN by Laurence Housman
DICTIONARY OF AMERICAN BIOGRAPHY (in twenty volumes)

•

1938

THE YEARLING by Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings
(Pulitzer Prize winner)
DYNASTY OF DEATH by Taylor Caldwell
THE PADEREWSKI MEMOIRS by Ignace Jan Paderewski
THE WORLD WAS MY GARDEN by David Fairchild

•

1939

ABE LINCOLN IN ILLINOIS by Robert E. Sherwood
(Pulitzer Prize winner)
ACROSS THE BUSY YEARS by Nicholas Murray Butler
ENJOYMENT OF POETRY by Max Eastman
(New and revised edition)

•

1940

FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS by Ernest Hemingway
TRAIL OF AN ARTIST-NATURALIST by Ernest Thompson Seton
THERE SHALL BE NO NIGHT by Robert E. Sherwood
(Pulitzer Prize winner)

•

1941

THE LAST TYCOON by F. Scott Fitzgerald
THE NATURE AND DESTINY OF MAN by Reinhold Niebuhr

•

1942

THE VALLEY OF DECISION by Marcia Davenport
THE PRODIGAL WOMEN by Nancy Hale
LEE'S LIEUTENANTS by Douglas Southall Freeman

•

1943

INDIGO by Christine Weston
THE FIFTH SEAL by Mark Aldanov
GOD IS MY CO-PILOT by Col. Robert L. Scott, Jr.
PARIS-UNDERGROUND by Etta Shiber
YANKEE LAWYER: THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF
EPHRAIM TUTT by Arthur Train

•

1944

THE HISTORY OF ROME HANKS by Joseph Stanley Pennell
COLCORTON by Edith Pope
A GUIDE FOR THE BEDEVILLED by Ben Hecht

•

1945

NO GREATER LOVE by Francis Cardinal Spellman
AMERICAN CHRONICLE by Ray Stannard Baker

•

1946

OF MAKING MANY BOOKS by Roger Burlingame
I CHOSE FREEDOM by Victor Kravchenko
THIS SIDE OF INNOCENCE by Taylor Caldwell
DO I WAKE OR SLEEP by Isabel Bolton

•

1947

ORDEAL OF THE UNION by Allan Nevins
EAST SIDE, WEST SIDE by Marcia Davenport

•

1948

CRY, THE BELOVED COUNTRY by Alan Paton
GEORGE WASHINGTON by Douglas Southall Freeman
TERROR AND DECORUM by Peter Viereck (Pulitzer Prize winner)

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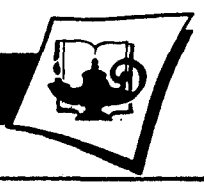

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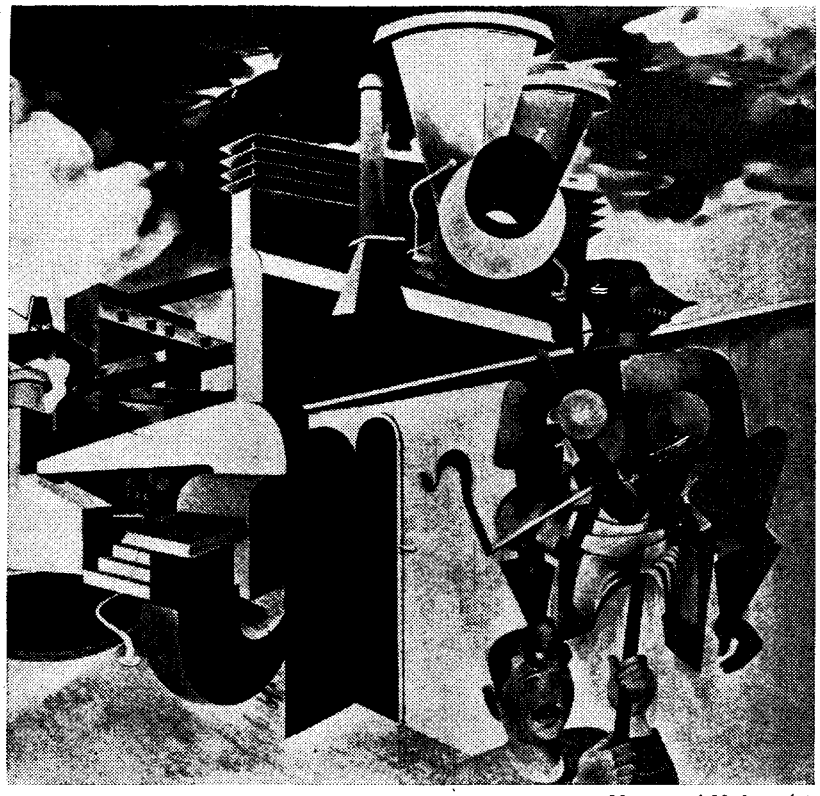
MACHINES *with and without* FREEDOM

DAVID E. LILIENTHAL



—*Museum of Modern Art.*

"Parade," by Peter Blume.

David E. Lilienthal

TO some people modern technology is plainly evil. To them, the more gadgets the more unpalatable is life. The more things we produce, the faster we can travel, the more complex the machines we invent, the nearer—they assert—we move to the edge of a bottomless pit. They ask: "Is not scientific warfare the inevitable fruit of technology? Are not ever more devastating atomic bombs the ultimate proof that modern applied science is a curse, an unmitigated blight?" Even great figures are heard to say: "Let us cease learning more of the world, let scientists declare a moratorium in their ceaseless prying into Nature's secrets." They are homesick for that simpler life, before the days when man produced so much and knew so much. They want to flee. But where and how? They cannot say. They cry out against science and the machine and call them evil; but their voices are the voices of despair and defeat.

There are others of our contemporaries who have an almost opposite view of the machine. You will find them all over the world. What they say is exuberant and uncritical. "Of course technology is good," they say, "for it produces more and more things; and isn't production the answer to everything?" They are usually skeptical of God, but they openly worship the machine.

"Of course the machine is good," they say. "When assembly lines cut costs, when production curves are upward or when Five-Year Plans are fulfilled—those are the important things; let's not agonize over the effect of the machine on the freedom of men."

Technology, they seem to say, is good as an end in itself. If the spirit of man balks, if the yearning to be human increases cost of production or requires coercion—well, man must be redesigned to fit the assembly line, not the assembly line revised for man. The supertechnologists of the world are quite prepared to recreate man in the image of the machine.

I venture to say that neither of these views—of the defeatist or the technolator—will appeal to most Americans.

The machine and technology are neither good nor evil in themselves. They are good only when man uses them for good. They are evil only if he puts them to evil purposes.

The machine can, of course, be so used as to degrade and enslave man. It can be used to exhaust the land and with it the human dignity of those who live on the land; it can poison the air, foul the streams, devastate the forests, and thereby doom men and women and children to the spiritual degradation of great poverty. But it can also open wider—and it has so opened—the doors of human opportunity; it can nourish the spirit of men. Technology can be used to eliminate filth and congestion and disease; to strengthen the soil; to conserve the forests; to humanize man's environment.

The machine can be so used as to make men free as they have never been free before.

We have a choice—that it seems to me is the shining and hopeful fact. If we are wise enough, if we follow our democratic precepts, we can control and direct technology and the machine and make them serve for good.

I believe in the great potentialities for well-being of the machine and technology; and though they do hold a real threat of enslavement and frustration for the human spirit, I believe those dangers can be averted. I believe that through the methods of democracy the world of technology holds out the greatest opportunity in all history for the development of the individual, according to his own talents, aspirations, and willingness to shoulder the responsibilities of a free man. I believe men can make themselves free. Men can direct technology so that it can carry mankind toward the fulfillment of the greatest promise for human life and the human spirit in all history.

But this result is by no means inevitable. It is equally possible that technology may yield a harvest of bitter fruit.

More huge cyclotrons and nuclear research reactors are not enough. More fine laboratories, more extensive projects in physical and social re-

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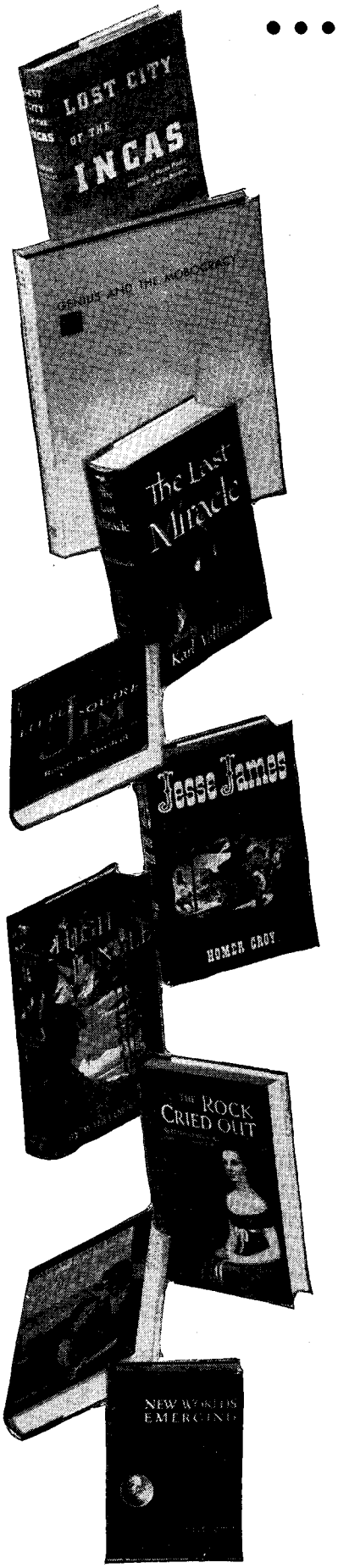
...DUELL, SLOAN and PEARCE



10 YEARS OF PROGRESS

Since Duell, Sloan and Pearce's first publication, in December 1939, of Archibald MacLeish's *America Was Promises,* they have built a publishing list in which they take considerable pride. Now, in this tenth anniversary year, the books which Duell, Sloan and Pearce are adding to their list embody more clearly than ever the prime intention of the firm: a small number of titles, rigorously selected, combining popular appeal and permanent value.

Outstanding on DS&P's current list is Frank Lloyd Wright's *Genius and the Mobocracy,* a searching indictment of the relationship between genius and society in the form of a biography of Wright's teacher, Louis H. Sullivan. This illustrated volume is notable not only for its content but for the perfection of its format and the exquisite reproduction of the Sullivan drawings.

Recent publications noteworthy in the general field include William Beebe's *High Jungle,* an account of his Venezuelan laboratory, which is this famous naturalist's first book in five years; *Jesse James Was My Neighbor,* a sparkling life of the James boys by the inimitable Homer Croy; Earl Parker Hanson's anti-Malthusian *New World's Emerging;* Norman Taylor's readable history of drugs, *Flight From Reality;* George Amberg's *Ballet in America;* and *Lost City of the Incas,* the story of the original discovery of Machu Picchu, by Hiram Bingham.

Finally, in fiction, Duell, Sloan and Pearce recommend the following current novels, each of which has been received enthusiastically by the book-reviewing and the book-buying public: Robert K. Marshall's *Little Squire Jim,* Edward Stanley's *The Rock Cried Out,* Karl Vollmoeller's *The Last Miracle,* Frederick F. Van de Water's *Catch a Falling Star,* Edwin Corle's *In Winter Light,* and Elswyth Thane's *Kissing Kin.*

DUELL, SLOAN and PEARCE

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search are not enough. More *use* of technology, more factories, more gadgets, whether in this country or in the undeveloped reaches of Africa and Asia and South America is not enough. Those who encourage a contrary belief are playing a dangerous game or are quite blind to the realities.

Unless the applications of research and technology are consciously related to a central purpose of human welfare, unless technology is defined and directed by those who believe in people and in democratic and ethical ends and means, it could be that the more research money we spend the further we miss the mark. It is like driving in an automobile that is going in the wrong direction; the faster and faster you drive the farther away from your destination you will be.

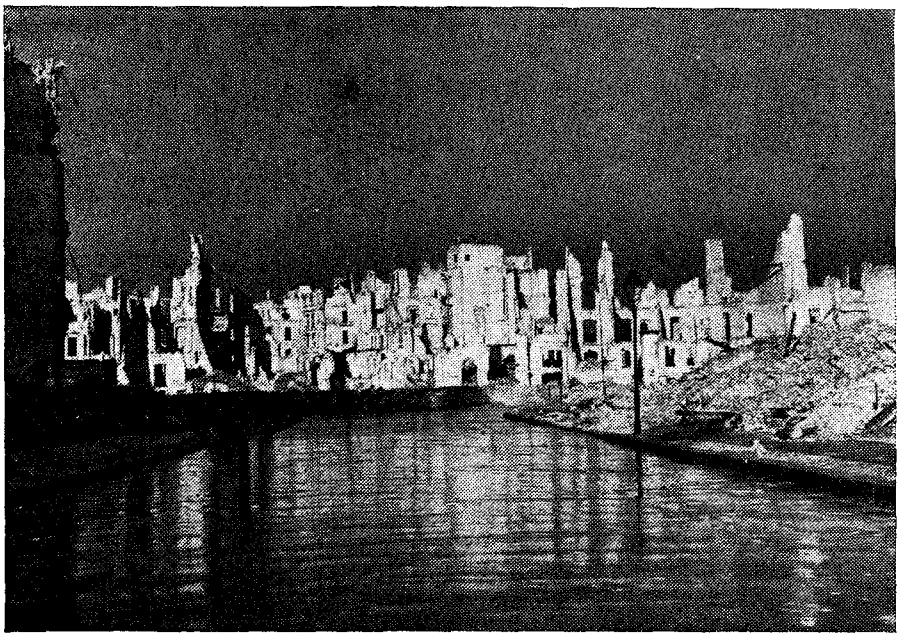
The guiding of technical activity is safe, in terms of the human spirit, only when it is in the hands of those, in private business and in public agencies, who have faith in the individual human being. It is only safe when it is carried on by methods that are in furtherance of that faith, and methods that insure accountability to the people for the results.

This is not always the case with modern technology. There are times when these matters are controlled by men who lack a faith in people. People, to them, are only a "market." They are a market to whom to sell new gadgets; a labor market with which to make the gadgets; a political market to be cajoled and organized and voted and coerced. Technical development under such direction will not further freedom or will do so only by accident, by sheer coincidence.

We know what amazing things applied research can do to increase the destructive powers of Armies and Navies and Air Forces—our own, or a potential enemy's. But we still must ask: What can technology do to nourish and strengthen the human spirit? What can technology do to safeguard and strengthen men's freedom?

That modern man can completely change his environment is a matter of common observation. Perhaps as widely known an illustration in other parts of the world is afforded by the development in the Tennessee Valley.

IN a single decade the face of a region larger than England was substantially altered, a region comprising parts of seven Southern states. The great Tennessee River has been changed: more than a score of huge dams make it do what men tell it to do. The farming land is changed—millions of acres—and the forests and woodlands. New factories, large and small, barges on the new river



—*International News Photo.*

Twentieth-century design for a city.

channel, and yards building ships; fields once dead and hideous with gullies now fruitful and green to the sun, secure with pastures and meadows; electric pumps in farmyards; new local and regional libraries; state parks and county health facilities—these and many other changes make it a new valley today. The job of development is not done, of course—such a task never is—but it is well on the way. It is one more demonstration that modern technical tools and managerial skills can control Nature and change the physical setting of our life in almost any way we choose—there is the point—in whatever way we as a people choose.

These changes in that valley—these physical changes—strike the eye. They are unmistakable evidence of what can be done. Equally impressive are the evidences of increased production of farm and factory, of rising individual income among people who have suffered under shockingly sparse incomes. But most important of all the changes is the change in the spirit of the valley's people. One of Alabama's younger leaders described it in these words:

> We can write of great dams . . . of the building of home-grown industry and of electricity at last coming to the farms of thousands of farm people in the valley. Yet the significant advances have been made in the thinking of a people. They are no longer afraid. They have caught the vision of their own powers. They can stand now and talk out in meeting. . . .

And they do!

The real significance to many observers of what has taken place in the valley of the Tennessee is this: This American experiment has fortified confidence that men need not be chained to the wheel of technology. If their purpose is firm and clear, and if they insist upon ways and means to make that purpose effective, man can use the machine in the interest of human welfare and the human spirit.

A GREAT many men and women from foreign countries have come to study the TVA. They have come from more than fifty countries, and in particular from the technically undeveloped regions of the world, and from areas in which unsparing and unwise exploitation threatens their natural resources with utter exhaustion. These visitors have not only seen new life come to a dying soil; they have also seen how a new hope and faith return to people living on that soil, have seen men's pride and their human dignity strengthened as their soil was strengthened. They have not only seen the once wasted energies of a great river turned into electricity but they have also seen the way that electricity has put an end to degrading drudgery in tens of thousands of homes. They have seen businessmen, farmers, laborers—all kinds of men and women—joining together to apply the lessons of science and technology to the building of their region, and in the very act of joining together for that common purpose have seen many of them become better neighbors, kinder and more generous and more cooperative human beings.

These hundreds of foreign visitors see with particular clarity that the new Tennessee Valley speaks in a tongue that is universal among men, a language of things close to the everyday lives of people: soil, forests, factories, minerals, rivers. No English

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interpreter is needed when a Chinese or a Hindu or a Peruvian sees these products of a working technology, sees a series of working dams, or a hillside pasture brought back to life by phosphate and lime and an understanding of soils. For it is not really Fontana Dam on a North Carolina stream or a farm in Kentucky that he sees, but a river, a valley, a farm in China or India or Peru.

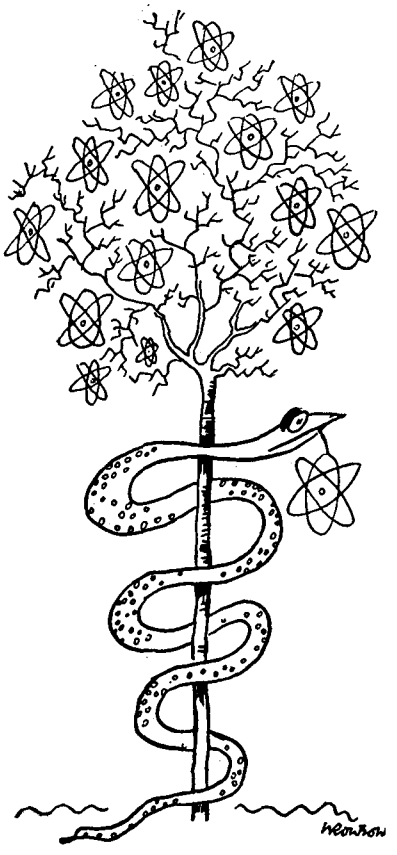
Because it is an illustration with which I am familiar, I have pointed to the Tennessee Valley as one bit of American evidence that *it can be done,* that men can use science and technology in the interest of the human spirit. It does not make the demonstration less relevant that only a beginning has been made in that valley, that the people of the valley realize what a long, long way there is yet to travel. And it should surely not be necessary to utter the warning that no one should regard the TVA, or any other one effort in this direction as a single way out. The paths are many, and TVA is but one of the many moving toward the same goal.

We have a choice. We can choose deliberately and consciously whether the machine or man comes first. But that choice will not be exercised on a single occasion, surrounded by spectacle and drama. We will move from decision to decision, from issue to issue, and we will be in the midst of this struggle for the rest of our days.

We cannot master the machine in the interest of the human spirit unless we have a faith in people. This is the foundation of everything. The rock upon which all these efforts rest must be a deep and abiding faith in human beings, which is a faith in the supreme worth of life. The machine can only add to the dignity and integrity of human existence if it is deliberately used in furtherance of such faith in people. It is the purpose for which the machine is used, and particularly the methods pursued in carrying out that purpose that determine whether technology is likely to further human well-being or to threaten it.

LET me restate: On one hand, it is clear that science in the hands of those seeking arbitrary power over men can make us slaves—well fed perhaps, but more pathetic for that fact. On the other hand, it is plain that men can use technology and the machine to further human freedom and the development of human personality.

How the machine shall be used will be determined by choices made by the people. But those choices are genuine choices only if the people make them with a knowledge of the facts, with a knowledge of the alternatives that are open to them. The means



whereby the people make their decisions depends upon a sacred and inviolable process—the dissemination of knowledge.

One such recent choice was the decision of the American people, through their elected representatives, in favor of civilian as distinguished from military direction of the scientific and technical development of atomic energy. After months of hearings and extended public discussion, Congress decided that although atomic energy is of central importance to the national defense, it also holds such broad implications for our health, agriculture, industry, education—in short our whole way of life—that it must be fitted into the democratic scheme of civilian self-government.

That was an important decision. But many other questions concerning atomic energy are before this country today, and many more will arise in the months and years ahead.

These questions concern every last one of us. They include such questions as these: What kind of Army, Navy, and Air Force do we now require, in the light of these new discoveries? What are safe and what are unsafe methods of international control of atomic energy to prevent its use as a surprise weapon? How extensively should the American people support medical research in this field, and similarly research in nutrition and in increasing the production of food by novel methods opened up by these new developments? What should be the place of private corporations in this brand-new technology, an industry that unlike anything the world has ever seen before was a giant at birth, and wholly government-owned? How do the people see to it that our universities and research institutions shall remain free of Government or military control when it is necessary that such vast sums for research and development be provided to them by the Federal treasury? How can the people see to it that narrow politics and pork-barrel methods are kept strictly out of this huge scientific, industrial, and educational enterprise? How can we maintain essential secrecy without drying up the very wellsprings of scientific and technical advances which flourish not in secrecy but in openness and free discussion?

The questions are manifold. The answers, the decisions, will affect directly the future well-being of the 145 million stockholders in this atomic enterprise, that is the people of the United States. They will indeed affect every human being on the globe.

Those decisions to be genuine democratic decisions require facts in the hands of the people. Indeed facts and the dissemination of knowledge are the very foundation of self-government, are the very foundation of any effort to direct technology toward the protection of the free spirit of man.

Because of its military aspects and the present unhappy international situation, it is not possible to make the whole atomic-energy field subject to public scrutiny. But as we on the Commission have studied the matter, we have found that much of what is going on in this strange new enterprise can with safety be publicly reported and publicly discussed. Wide dissemination of facts and broad public discussion in this field must continue and must increase. For unless the people have the essential facts about atomic energy they cannot act wisely nor can they act democratically.

It is well that we recall our basic tenet: that this democracy of ours is founded upon a faith in the judgment of the people as a whole. It is founded upon a belief that when the people are informed—honestly and clearly informed—their conscience and their common sense can be relied upon to carry us safely through any crisis. The direction of applied science and the machine by the judgment and conscience of the people as a whole requires that we be an informed people.

Faith in the people must have as its corollaries faith in the facts, faith in the power of knowledge, faith in the free flow of ideas, and hence faith in education and the processes of education. These are the very pillars of our free society.

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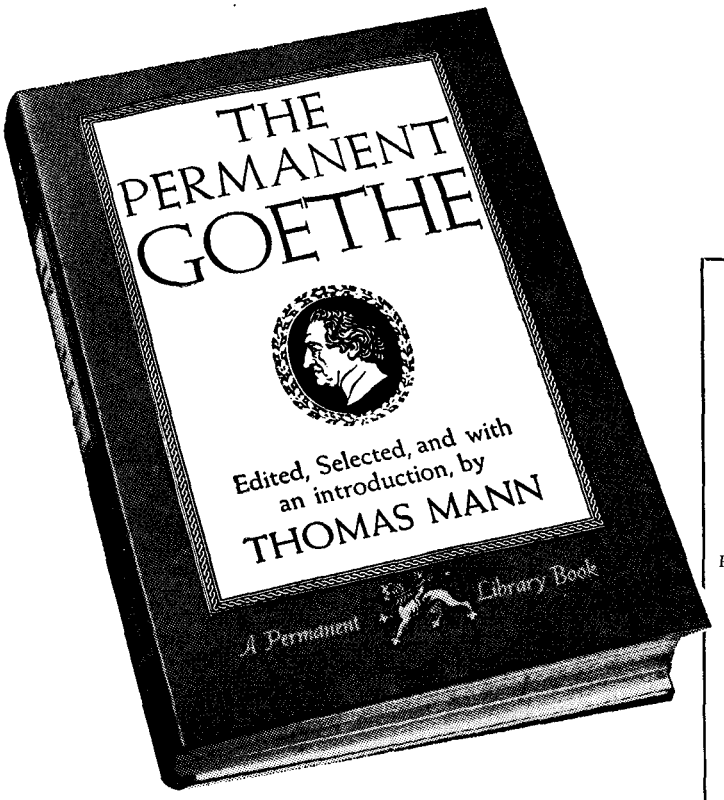
PUBLISHED TO MARK THE GOETHE BICENTENNIAL

THOMAS MANN presents the best of Goethe



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1. Ideas as Master Switches

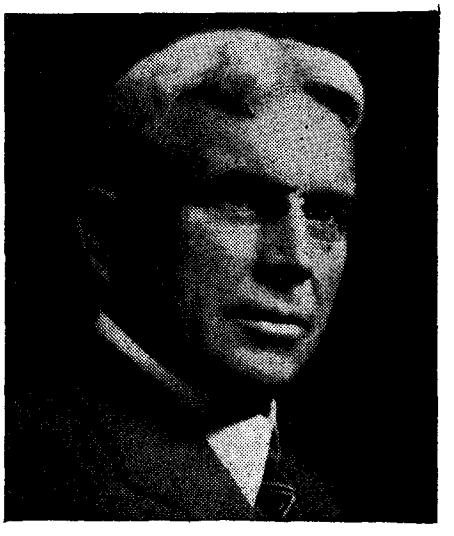
DIXON WECTER

Dixon Wecter

BOOKS of recent times remind us by their titles alone that ideas are weapons, also that ideas have consequences. Neither statement can be denied after the show of power which propaganda and counterpropaganda have given the modern world—if their earlier impact, for instance, in the rise of Islam, the Crusades, or the French Revolution, stood in any danger of being forgotten. Ideas appear to be master switches that control enormous voltages of collective energy. "Thought control" is obviously the essence of any true dictatorship—as has been recognized from Aristotle to George Orwell—while so-called subversive ideas are the dynamite by which old worlds are blasted apart. In this generation we may need to remind ourselves that not all vital ideas are politico-economic ones. Less abruptly dramatic than the boiling over of long-simmering ideas to produce war and revolution, but no less striking in the history of the modern mind, are the results of a concept, say, like evolution, or of time and history about which Reinhold Niebuhr has lately written.

It seems clear that the proper study of mankind, from many points of view, is that of Man Thinking. A widespread urge to try to clarify the welter of past and present into some intellectual pattern, whether somber or hopeful, brought Spengler into favor after the First World War and Toynbee (incidentally a much better scholar and wiser guide) after the Second. A history of ideas in terms of the great globe itself—the symbols and stereotypes which they become in the cultures of all peoples—is a project too ambitious for even Professor Toynbee, although his "Study of History" contains inklings of that grand design. But in narrower fields the history of ideas is under constant cultivation by many hands. How ideas spring up in a certain social climate, how they act upon each other by fusion or compromise or antagonism, how they harden into the common coin of clichés or vaporize into foggy generalities, and how they affect the people possessed by them—these are all matters that can be studied piecemeal. And following a given idea, say, from economics to politics to literature to education to religion and so on, can be as fascinating to the observer as, to the physiologist, the often unpredictable track through circulatory system and tissue of a radioactive isotope.

American literature is a particularly fruitful orchard for the historian of ideas. Since it began, this literary output has been consistently short on belles-lettres, long on writing that seeks to explain, analyze, exhort, and persuade. Moses Coit Tyler in his day made the most of his chances in writing those classic histories of colonial and Revolutionary literature. Forty years later the "Cambridge History of American Literature" gave certain able chapters to intellectual history, while from the other side of the fence a rising generation of historians led by Schlesinger, Nevins, and others began to utilize the literary and subliterary records of the past with a knack and instinct outside the ken of George Bancroft. Almost a quarter century ago Vernon L. Parrington began to write, after years of reflection and teaching, the first pages of his "Main Currents in American Thought," published in three volumes in 1927-30. Here for the first time our literary culture, including political oratory, polemics, pamphleteering and some journalism, was set in an ordered frame of social and economic thought. Impatiently brushing past the moral, esthetic, and conventionally "patriotic" issues that had long detained the literary historian, Parrington plunged straight to the heart of those ideas which actually nourished so much of this writing at the time it was done. The result was as germinal as Turner's thesis about the frontier, Beard's economic interpretation of politics and law, or the instrumentalism of James and Dewey in espousing an open, ever-changing world order. Other students rubbed their eyes, seized anew their tools of research, and began to stake out fresh and rewarding claims along the Mother Lode.



Vernon L. Parrington—"a tonic influence."

AND yet Parrington's work, for all its still communicable enthusiasm, has many errors of judgment and some of fact. His chief shortcomings are typical of the fertile though not always wholly compatible marriage between intellectual and literary history. All that came into his net—from the Mathers and the Simple Cobbler of Aggawam down to Edgar Allan Poe and James Branch Cabell—was scrutinized from the same beloved point of view, that of liberal Jeffersonian agrarianism, and usually graded according to this preconceived measure. Such methods not only worked individual injustice but also oversimplified the course of American thought—though never to such extremes of distortion as in the later Marxist interpretations of the same literature or some of it, by V. F. Calverton, Granville Hicks, and Bernard Smith. The presence of too rigid an ideology at the writer's elbow always means the sacrifice of good judgment and proportion in design. The historian of ideas who comes hunting through the preserves of literature with thesis in hand can be counted upon to flush game that has escaped the more conventional critic, but out of sheer exuberance to exceed his quota and return with a miscellaneous bag that is not lawfully defensible.

Beyond question, "Main Currents in American Thought" has had a tonic influence over the twenty years since its author's untimely death in the summer of 1929. From his study at the University of Washington—a campus, by the way, which might use a few more brilliant grass-roots Populists today to counteract less healthy

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influences both to the Right and the Left—Parrington went far to revolutionize the writing of literary history, and, with the support of certain critics and social historians, to lay foundations for the history of ideas in America. To ignore the new school has been almost impossible. Almost, I say, in deference to the distinguished example of Van Wyck Brooks, who has long since abandoned the vein he began in books like "The Wine of the Puritans" and "America's Coming-of-Age." If Parrington wrote literary history which became almost wholly a history of ideas, Mr. Brooks in his later years has contrived to write charming literary history very nearly drained of them. But the main drift has been otherwise. For example, the recent three-volume "Literary History of the United States," edited by Spiller, Thorp, Johnson, and Canby, written by many hands, gives proportionately much more space than the "Cambridge History" to tracing the configurations of ideas through three and a half centuries, along with examining the instruments of culture by which these ideas spread to the people. Also, the *Journal of the History of Ideas*, begun in 1940, has shown a constant interweaving of history with literature, along with liberal strands of economics, politics, esthetics, religion, and philosophy.

In fact, the historian of ideas working in this last quarter century has found himself in constant revolt against compartmentalization. Like the social historian and the specialist in comparative literature, in the pursuit of his interests he leaps walls and crosses borders in the landscape of knowledge laid out by more formal cultivators. And, like both the social historian and the folklorist, he is eager to welcome the broad-based and popular run-of-the-mill writing, chapbook as well as classic, photographs of the mass mind as well as the posed masterpieces of literary art or philosophy. He also owns kinship with the historian of philosophy, but their ways are not identical. Professor Arthur O. Lovejoy, of Johns Hopkins,—dean of our historians of ideas and one of the best—despite his predilection for uprooting ideas from the social humus whence they sprang and contemplating them under a bell jar—once explained how his calling differed from that of the student of philosophy. The chief difference, he found, is that his own guild tries to break down the aggregates found in schools of philosophy, to reduce them to "unit-ideas" much in the manner

(*Continued on page* 166)

2. *History Without Ideas*

ELMER DAVIS

Elmer Davis

IN HIS preface to "The Law of Civilization and Decay," Brooks Adams observed that the examination of long periods of history had convinced him of "the exceedingly small part played by conscious thought in molding the fate of men."

Writing in 1896, Adams could contend with some plausibility as well as topical relevance that the fate of men had been largely molded by the expansion and contraction of the currency. But an Adams of all people might have been expected to remember that a century or so earlier the fate of men on this continent had been molded by conscious thought—including, in large degree, the thought of his own great-grandfather. The separation of the colonies from England may have been made inevitable by other and impersonal forces; but the way it happened, and still more what happened to the American states after that separation, was an achievement of conscious thought to which history can show few if any parallels.

But if Adams had survived till our time, he would have found plenty of reason for skepticism about the influence of thought, even though recent decades have played hob with his general philosophy of history. The dominance of the money-lenders, which he regarded as inevitable in an age of centralization and consolidation, was undone by a development which Spengler foresaw twenty years before it happened; and the alternative in Adams's systole and diastole, the preeminence of the "martial and imaginative" type, hardly fits our age when few martial men are imaginative and few imaginative men are willingly martial. But it cannot be said that the quarter century reviewed in this anniversary issue has been much affected by conscious thought; and if you look back over the conscious, and especially the articulate thought of that quarter century, you can only say, "Thank God."

For any influence on the fate of man (except in one respect, to be noted presently) the ideas set forth in the most admired American literature of the past twenty-five years have been incompetent, irrelevant, immaterial, null, and void. This is no great news; it was demonstrated some years ago by Bernard de Voto in "The Literary Fallacy"—a work which provoked howls of execration, much of it personal; but no convincing reply. The novelists could indeed reply that they were not trying to mold the fate of men, they were only Painting the Thing as They Saw It. No doubt they faithfully depicted what they saw, but there seem to have been some aspects of the Thing that escaped their notice. For what was the Thing? The United States—an extensive and complex nation, contradictory, perplexing, and often exasperating; a nation composed of members of the human race, some good, some bad, and mostly mixed; a nation of which much might be said that is true while overlooking much else that is equally true. And a nation which is not merely the object of an artist's contemplation, but a fact of some importance in and to the world.

A nation which shortly before this quarter century began had made—for excellent reasons, which it never seemed quite to understand—the final decisive contribution to victory in a great war of coalitions. Which for a

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while after that maintained the highest standard of living ever known—not for all its people, but for more than had ever lived so well before. Which then fell unexpectedly into a great depression, whose psychological effects were even more catastrophic than the economic—yet which managed eventually to come out of it, with a better balanced structure of political and economic power, with an altered outlook, and (unlike some other nations) with all its liberties preserved.

Which thereafter—again for excellent reasons which many people never seemed quite to understand—made by far the largest contribution to victory in the greatest war in history; producing enough to supply the deficiencies of its allies while it sent out armies that fought victoriously in three continents, and fleets that ruled the seas. And which, when the clouds returned after the rain, poured out its wealth and energy in a reasoned and intelligent endeavor to rebuild and protect nations damaged by war and threatened by new aggression. A nation whose dependent friends sometimes resent its superior good fortune, but know none the less that it is the best hope that they will have a chance to try to work out their own problems in peace, in a world where both nations and minds are free. (Yes, a nation some of whose citizens keep trying to abridge the freedom of the mind; but against such stubborn opposition that they have had little success.)

THAT is what America of the second quarter of the twentieth century will look like in history if the historians get their material from factual records. They will find no such picture in contemporary American literature.

And what of it? If American writers faithfully set down what they saw, what difference does it make that they didn't see some other things? Only this, as Gerald Johnson lately remarked in *The New York Times Book Review*—that certain men in Europe, and certain other men in Asia, mistook the literary picture (and the somewhat different picture presented by American movies) for the total picture; and thus were misled into "a grossly inaccurate estimate of the situation." That inaccurate estimate molded their fate, finally and decisively; but it also had a considerable and unpleasant influence on the fate of all the rest of us. And, unfortunately, there are signs that some other men in Europe are making a similarly inaccurate estimate now.

There is no evidence that Hitler, Tojo, and Mussolini had read much if any American literature; but they were all affected by a climate of opinion based largely on what Americans said about America. American propaganda in the Forties had to spend a good deal of money, and a good deal of thought, to bring into proportion the impression created abroad by American literature and American movies in the Twenties and Thirties. Literature and movies told different stories, with some few exceptions, but they pointed to the same conclusion. Dr. Goebbels, by far the most intelligent of the Nazis, was sure that America was incapable of any great war production; and even after he found he was wrong about that, he was sure that Americans could not or would not fight.

I do not know where he got that impression but I know where he could have got it. American literature of the Thirties mostly saw things from a different viewpoint than that of the Twenties, but the picture was substantially the same—a nation rotten to the core, in which the crass and wicked flourish while the righteous are trodden underfoot (or, worse, ignored). Such a nation could not possibly win a war; but somehow it did.

Writers of the Twenties painted the thing as they saw it, and what they saw was not pretty. The age of Harding and Coolidge, or the prosperity-prohibition complex, was an ignoble era, both morally and esthetically (though candor compels me to admit that it was also, in an ignoble way, fun). The writers of the nation did not like it and said so, but they offered no alternative, except the nihilism of Mencken; indeed they saw no need of an alternative, for as little as the admirers of the complex did they doubt that it would last forever. Once it began to fall apart, they did not know what to say. The new writers of the Thirties knew what to say; they had got it from a book, or rather usually from gossip about a book. They thought they were Marxists and Leninists but few of them knew much about Marx or Lenin, and those who bothered to find out were mostly cured by the experience. But the books had got written—books that depicted a nation unable to fight and not worth fighting for, books which had some share in creating a grossly inaccurate estimate in Berlin and Tokyo.

Just once, that inaccurate estimate happened to be useful. When the *Chicago Tribune,* three days before Pearl Harbor, gave away the plans by which we proposed to fight the Germans and the Japanese if we had to, the story was at once taken to Hitler; who might have rearranged his dispositions to make things a good deal harder for us. But he didn't; he knew that America was all bluff and could never send five million men overseas. Unfortunately, if he had not been sure earlier that America was all bluff we might never have had to send five million men overseas.

WELL, we won that war; and it must be noted that most of the writers who had painted this depressing picture were in there doing what they could to help win it. It might be supposed that that demonstration would have been taken to heart by the men in the Kremlin, but there are signs that something is misleading them. Perhaps the reports of their diplomats; there is some reason to believe that they do not dare say anything but what their masters want to hear; but it is quite possible that those masters may derive some mistaken impressions from what Americans say about America and about Americans in the late war.

Postwar fiction I know only at sec-

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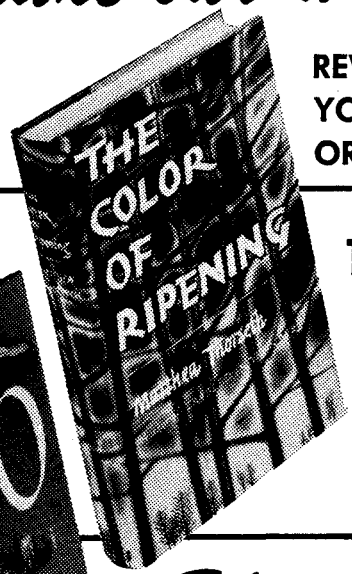

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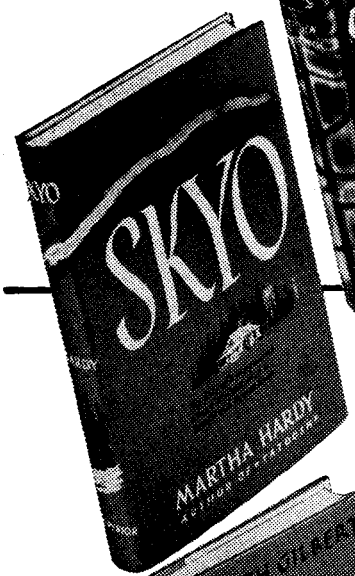

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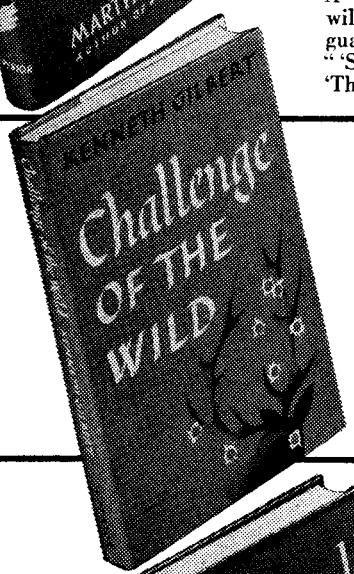

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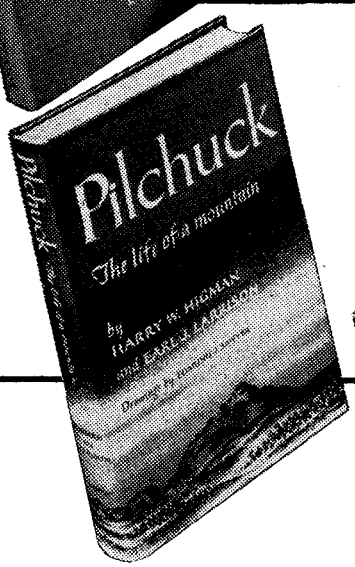

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THROUGH HISTORY WITH J. WESLEY SMITH

"Please sit down, General, you're rocking the boat."

ond hand, from averaging the reviews in the half dozen best-thought-of organs of criticism. I have tried to read several novels about the war by men who were in it but the only one I was able to finish was "Command Decision"—a moving and convincing picture of the pressures and temptations of men of great responsibility, under supreme stress; but men who knew what they were doing and why. I get a comparable impression from Ernest Dupuy's "St. Vith"—not fiction but history, and the history of a lost battle—a complex tragedy of many men, good and bad, under a pressure which cracked some of them and made others grow up fast; but a tragedy which was only part of a whole. If most war novels convey any such impression, they have been misrepresented by their reviewers. I have no doubt the authors faithfully reported what they saw, and that most of it was extremely unpleasant; if they chose not to relate it to anything else, that was their privilege. Still, from an average of many reviews of many novels I get the impression of an army that could not possibly have won a war; and something seems to be wrong with that picture.

But it may be taken as the total picture, by the people who maintain that they alone won the war, and may have come to believe their own story. Lately a Mr. Alexander Fadeyeff has been assigned to the job of denouncing America, at conferences of intellectuals, not only as a hateworthy nation but as a corrupt and rotten nation, abysmally inferior to the pure and virile Soviet society. And where does he get his evidence? Mostly from American books. Fadeyeff says what he is told to say; if the men who lay down his line for him hate us, that is regrettable but not too important; indeed they may not hate us at all, but only find it politically convenient to pretend they do. But if they think we are a pushover, that is more serious; for it might lead to another miscalculation, which we could indeed correct, but only at great expense and inconvenience. On the factual record they have no excuse for so thinking; but Fadeyeff, at least, has read our literature, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.

When Gerald Johnson said that, he evoked the predictable response—"Great is Diana of the Ephesians." He was accused of wanting to harness writers to hucksterism, of applying the theories of the marketplace to literature; which of course he had not done. "The American novelist, if he is worthy of that name," writes one of Johnson's critics, "chooses his subject wherever his consciousness and his imagination lead him." Johnson didn't say he shouldn't; he gave modern writers full credit for painting the thing as they saw it; he merely regretted that so few of them seem to have noticed the outstanding fact of recent history—that the United States, with all its faults, is something that people are willing to fight for, in the clutch; and that it wins its wars.

Upton Sinclair has taken note of that, and apparently with some effect; at any rate he who was once the American author most popular in Russia is now officially listed there as a war-mongering lackey of Wall Street.

The irrelevance of most of the ideas of modern literature is perhaps, except in that one respect, of no great importance. But a retrospect of the last quarter century raises a more profound and disturbing question. We live in an age of competing ideologies, some of which claim total and final validity, an age in which the fate of men is being drastically and often violently molded. But how much of that molding is due to ideas, to conscious thought? The most outstanding instance is a molding in reverse.

Ideas were a minor element in the Nazi movement; that was something that bubbled up from underground, an eruption of the primal slime. Still it had an apparatus of what passed for ideas, and they helped to ruin the men who held them. Anti-Semitism was not merely a propaganda slogan; Hitler took it seriously. Hence as many Jews as could got out of his reach, including some who helped to devise the atomic bomb. He was gone before the bomb went off—thanks largely to his anti-Slavism, which he also took seriously. In many parts of Russia in the summer of 1941 the German invaders were received as liberators. Goebbels would have cashed in on that; but to Hitler all Slavs were *Untermenschen*, the peasant was an enemy just as much as the commissar. So presently every German unit was fighting the Russian Army in front and the Russian people in its rear, with ultimately calamitous consequences.

OF COURSE there is Communism, a very elaborate and pretentious system of ideas: ideas which have had a considerable propaganda value among people who have not seen how they work out in practice. But I doubt if those ideas have been of much effect in molding the fate of men. They had been knocking around for seventy years before they fell into the hands of a man who could put them to work—knocking around, and getting diluted into English Fabianism and German Revisionism. How did it happen that Lenin could put them to work? Partly because he, like Marx, seethed with a hatred and intolerance of which the Hyndmans and Bernsteins were incapable; but mostly because he happened to be a great inventor. The Russians now claim priority in practically all inventions; actually they have produced only one of first-rate importance, and that is probably the most pernicious invention in human history—the Leninist technique of seizing and retaining power. How it was conceived and elaborated you can read in David Shub's biography of Lenin; how it works now in Koestler's "Darkness at Noon"; what it might become in a few decades in George Orwell's horrible "Nineteen Eighty-Four." It is pernicious above all because anybody could use it—anybody who has anything that could be made to look like a cause; the Nazis used it and added a few embellishments, which Stalin and his stooges took over. And even if it never develops

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J. B. Lippincott Company, which has been publishing under one name for more than a century and which dates its origin from 1792, takes pleasure in congratulating that lusty youngster, *The Saturday Review of Literature,* on the completion of its first quarter-century, and wishes it continued success.

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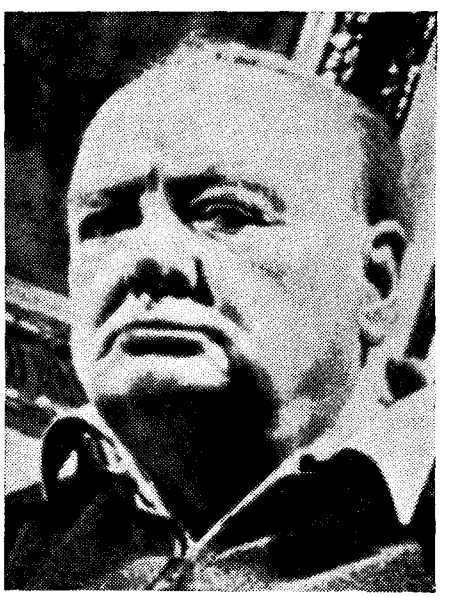
to the perfection that Orwell depicts, it is so diabolically effective that it is not likely ever to die out of human memory, even when the present regime of Russia is one with Nineveh and Tyre.

Every "Communist" success from Petrograd in 1917 to Prague in 1948 was the achievement of this revolutionary technique, not of the ideas it professed to serve. (China is the first exception, but what happened there appears to have been no product of conscious thought but the effect of a general popular conviction that it was time for a change.) Lenin was a man of powerful intellect but this revolutionary technique—a blend of deceit and fraud and force, of appeals to reason and democracy when you are weak followed by ruthless suppression when you are strong—can hardly be called an idea; it was a piece of mental gadgetry, like the strategy of a successful football team or a winning system at the bridge table. Marx's ideas very much diluted, their fiery red washed down to the palest of pastel pinks, may yet amount to something in England and Western Europe. But from Dresden to Vladivostok, it is not ideas that have molded the fate of men.

England is another story, though the ideas that have molded recent English history are not the ideas that could be found in English literature between wars. "Point Counterpoint" was only the most brilliant of a hundred pictures of a decadent society, aimless, hopeless, and gutless, which would cave in at the first hard push, or even at the first loud woof. The archimagus of that literature had prophesied that the world ends, not with a bang but a whimper; but as it turned out it didn't end at all, and if it had it would at least have gone out with a bang. Up till the end of 1938 the literary picture seemed accurate, but then something began to happen—the operation of conscious thought. The nation which in September 1938 had hurrahed for peace in our time went deliberately, in September 1939, into a war it might once more have tried to stay out of. Staying out would of course have been suicidal, but the British nation and its elected representatives came to the reasoned conclusion that it would be suicidal and went in instead. That time thought came through.

IT CAME through again after the war, when a nation which for six years had made a more nearly all-out effort than any other deliberately subjected itself to a program of austerity, foregoing present satisfactions in the reasoned hope of future benefit—something that is generally regarded as a sign of intellectual and emotional maturity. But in between, especially in that year when England stood alone, if ideas had much to do with the resistance it was ideas so long familiar that they had soaked into the bones. Churchill said little about the ideas they were fighting for but much about the fact that they were fighting for the right to have their own ideas instead of other people's. Ed Murrow, in the midst of the blitz winter, said that what sustained them was a conviction that most of them had never put into words—the conviction that they were a Master Race. Churchill's history never puts it quite so bluntly, but it stands out from his story that the dominant sentiment of England that



—© *Time, Inc.*

Churchill: "They can't do that to us."

winter was simply, They can't do that to us. As indeed, in the end, they could not.

How about us? This republic more than any other nation owes its origin to ideas; and its framework was constructed by conscious thought, so well that few major alterations have ever been necessary. But how far has the fate of its citizens been molded by conscious thought in this past quarter of a century? Not, I am afraid, very much.

In that time the underlying assumptions of American thinking have changed immensely; for proof of that you need only read the Republican platform of 1948, which to Calvin Coolidge would have been little more appetizing than the Communist Manifesto. But the practical effect of thinking on American life can be measured by the total indifference of most of the Republicans in Congress to the promises of that platform—or the almost equally total indifference of many Democrats in Congress to the promises of their platform. The changes in the American point of view, due chiefly to Mr. Roosevelt, have been emotional rather than intellectual changes. The Roosevelt New Deal was a series of experiments and improvisations, sometimes successful, sometimes not, but they were all tried. The Truman Fair Deal is a coherent and logical structure which is still on paper; most of it is going to remain there for quite a while.

TWICE in recent years there has been some hard and vigorous thinking which issued in some practical result. The first period began in May 1940, when we realized that the fence that had so conveniently stood between us and Hitler had gone down. Mr. Roosevelt had some ideas as to what to do about that and put enough of them into practical effect to save the immediate situation, but only over continuous and violent opposition. And when he had saved the immediate situation many people thought the fence had been rebuilt and there was nothing to worry about; a year and a quarter after the fall of France the House of Representatives came within one vote of disbanding most of our Army. That we went into the war with enough national unity to win it was due not to any reasoning process but to the emotional shock of Pearl Harbor—not only a disaster to the national interest but, even more potently, a profound affront to the national self-esteem.

In the intervening year and a half there had been a great deal of sound thinking by many men. Some of it may have been merely provisional; to Mr. Dos Passos, for instance, Roger Williams and Joel Barlow may have been only stops where he took on water while steaming across from left to right. But what he said about them made sense; the thinking of that year and a half was on the whole better thinking than had been done in the United States for at least seventy years. Yet it had little influence on the action that followed. We were in a war for the preservation here, and the restoration abroad, of the most important ideas and principles in the world; Mr. Roosevelt had expressed those principles more clearly than anybody else, but when we were fighting for them his estimate of what most people were fighting for was summed up in the name he gave it—the War for Survival.

It was that—survival for us, and for the principles too—but few men were consciously fighting for those principles. Indeed, it was a matter of wide observation, and much regret, that most of our men in uniform did not seem to know what they were fighting for at all. An effort was made to tell them, but it had only limited success, for it encountered determined opposi-

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Advertisement

A Report to SRL readers on *American Freedom and Catholic Power*

"How did you happen to get the manuscript?"

In February of last year we read in the New York *Herald Tribune* and in *Newsweek* that Paul Blanshard—whose articles were running in *The Nation*—was preparing a book . . . and that he was having trouble placing the manuscript. We thought this ought to be looked into. We had never published a book on his subject, and had no particular intention of doing so. In fact, that same season we turned down a book in this field because of its inadequacies.

Paul Blanshard

We asked a trusted adviser in New York—a recognized authority on groups in our democracy that shape public policy—to make inquiry. He vouched for the integrity of the author. Soon the manuscript came to us.

"What made you decide to publish it?"

We put the manuscript to rigorous tests. We mimeographed 50 copies of the entire manuscript, and distributed them among a panel of scholars and other advisers. They had many suggestions to make. We noted with interest that in nearly every case the suggestions were stylistic; the author's statements of fact were confirmed again and again. The chapters on medicine were reviewed by the dean of American gynecologists, and the chapters on education were examined by a recognized authority in the field. A scholar in Rome double-checked quotations and interpretations with the help of the unique resources available there. Chapter by chapter, the book stood up.

The author took the hundreds of suggestions under advisement, and prepared another draft. Again, we had the entire manuscript stencilled, and 50 copies run off on the mimeograph. Back the copies went to the original group. The original process was repeated. Only after a third draft was painstakingly prepared did the manuscript go to the printer for setting in type.

By that time we had hammered out a short statement that expressed our conviction about the project. We have used it on the jacket of the completed book. It reads:

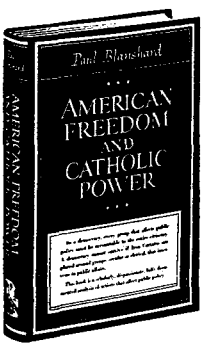
> "In a democracy, every group that affects public policy must be accountable to entire citizenry. A democracy cannot survive if Iron Curtains are placed around groups, secular or clerical, that intervene in public affairs."

Maybe we have a naive conception of the responsibility of American publishing. But it is inconceivable to us that in America there need be any hesitation over the publication of documented facts in *any* field. When we were satisfied that the book *did* consist of documented facts, we decided to go ahead.

"Just what has happened?"

As this is written, it is two months since publication day, and the book has just reached the best-seller list of the *New York Times*. There have been four printings already, and a fifth is in the works. Many stores have re-ordered four, five, six times. Yards of reviews have appeared. The author's favorite review appears in the June issue of *The Catholic World*. Without pointing out a single misstatement of fact, the reviewer devotes nearly a page and a half to dismissing the book on the grounds that it merely "offers material for a study of the *New Nativism*. That is the only interesting thing about it; all the stuff about the Church we've already 'had,' albeit usually in more scurrilous form. But his use of the terms 'American' and 'un-American' as categories of ultimate value is significant in regard of the contemporary drift toward a cultural *monism*, the idea of the democratic state as All There Is, and a colossal national self-righteousness."

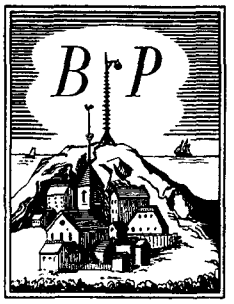
The reviewer writes: "In sum, 'join the rest of the American community' (p. 88), and 'without reservations'* (p. 288), under denial of all allegiance to 'alien and undemocratic powers, the Vatican and the Kremlin' (p. 260). That is the way to Blanshardian salvation." The author says he is given too much credit in that last sentence; he says he is merely one of several million Americans with the same conviction.



The Beacon Press, Boston

P.S. The book is at your booksellers; 350 pages; $3.50.

*The full quotation: "Meanwhile, as the cost of maintaining segregated schools increases, and as the public-school system is improved from the kindergarten through the state university, the Catholic [school] system finds itself more than ever on the defensive. The invitation to join the American community without reservation becomes more and more appealing. In the long run I think that the invitation will be accepted, and I think that the fundamental Americanism of the Catholic people will triumph over a medieval ecclesiastical machine—*provided* we cherish and develop our public schools."



What others say about 'American Freedom' Study

JOHN DEWEY, Dean of American philosophers: "Mr. Blanshard has done a difficult and necessary piece of work with exemplary scholarship, judgment and tact."

NEWSWEEK: "An important and controversial discussion of a vital topic of our day."

LIBRARY JOURNAL: recommended for libraries.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR: "What gives [the author's criticisms] force is the fact that they are measured, coolly reasoned, and backed by a broad range of careful, scholarly research. . . . *The effects of this book are likely to be historic.*"

CHRISTIANITY AND CRISIS (review by Henry Sloane Coffin, President Emeritus, Union Theological Seminary and former Moderator of the Presbyterian Church): ". . . the gratitude of all freedom-cherishing Americans goes to him (the author) for his fearless and painstaking handling of this delicate and controversial theme, which most of his fellow-citizens dare not mention above a whisper. . . . Dr. Blanshard's volume *should be in the hands of every thoughtful American.*"

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THE HARTFORD COURANT: "This informative work, dealing as it does with a very live issue of national importance, should be read by both Catholics, Protestants and all other Americans, for it concerns all of us."

THE CROZER QUARTERLY: "This is a real book. It is a terribly important book. It must be reckoned with. It cannot be ignored. . . . The author does not attempt to sway his readers by partisan bias or eloquence. He presents his facts and leaves his reader in the good old American way to reach his own conclusions."

Fourth printing

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tion from people who were afraid that any serious effort to find out what it was all about would show that Roosevelt had been right and they had been wrong. What is more disturbing is that the American school system had given our men so little idea of what they were fighting for. Edmond Taylor, watching French conscripts go off to war in 1939, thought they looked like Hamlets in uniform. Our soldiers, by that token, might have been called followers of Fortinbras.

But Fortinbras won his war, and they won theirs. Why were they fighting? Because they had to, some have said; but most men in most armies had to fight and there was a difference in the way they did it. Italians who were fighting because they had to surrendered in droves to a quarter their number of British and Australians, many of whom also had to fight. Other Italians, for whatever reason, fought well. A theory earnestly propagated at the time was that our men were fighting for the status quo ante and the exact prewar distribution of income; evidence for that was never convincing. Eric Sevareid thought that what kept them up was the team spirit they had learned in school, whether they had learned anything else there or not. The one thing clear is that no very large number of our soldiers seemed to fit that classic definition of the good soldier—a man who knows what he fights for, and loves what he knows.

There was one army that fitted that definition perfectly—men who knew that their entire race had a tinge of divinity, that it was destined to bring the eight corners of the world under one roof; and that nothing could be more glorious than to die for their God-Emperor in achieving that end. Soldiers like that ought to have been able to walk right over men who preferred to go on living, did not think their President was a god, and were not quite sure what it was all about anyway. But they didn't.

Well, there has been one other recent instance of conscious thought that molded the fate of men—the Marshall Plan. It was a reasoned program, intelligently conceived to attain an imperatively necessary end; its conception and its amplification in detail were a notable feat of the intellect. And what persuaded Congress to accept it? Mostly the emotional reaction to the seizure of Czechoslovakia and the defenestration of Jan Masaryk. Now that the immediate crisis is past, Congressional enthusiasm is cooling. To the economy bloc the Marshall Plan is now chiefly important as the handiest place to save money—far better than cutting down on engineering and construction programs in a man's own district; while some of the farm Senators see it as a mechanism for unloading American agriculture surplus, whether Europe needs them or not.

And there was last November's election. Having been as wrong as everybody else in forecasting its outcome I hesitate to offer any positive interpretation. When one candidate was discussing the issues of the day in detail while the other indulged in cloudy abstractions about unity, it might seem that the majority of the electorate made its decision as a result of conscious thought. Perhaps it was that—or perhaps it was instinctive revulsion, not against the Republican candidate but against the Republican record, which he so studiously ignored. For fourteen years up to the beginning of 1947 we had been living under the New Deal; for the last eight of those years it had not been operative, being superseded by the war and postwar problems; but it was still there in name, the easy and obvious scapegoat for every man's dissatisfactions. In those fourteen years of the New Deal most people had forgotten what the Old Deal was like; but the Eightieth Congress gave them a reminder and one dose was enough.

AND what does all this add up to? I wish I knew, and hope it does not prove the conclusion that might hastily be drawn from it. All my life I have believed that the most important part of human experience is what happens above the neck, and that the brain is a more dependable thinking instrument than the muscles or the bowels. I still think so, and hope that these foregoing observations of fact will not give aid and comfort to antirational or pseudo-rational philosophies. But it is certainly an observed fact that conscious thought, while it has been powerfully effective in molding the fate of men at certain periods —the later eighteenth century and early nineteenth century, for instance, both here and abroad—has not often had a decisive influence on recent history.

Perhaps conscious thought has less influence on action than unconscious thought—ideas so old and familiar that they have soaked into the bones and become part of a man's whole personality. The British can regard themselves as a Master Race because by this time they are at any rate a race, Saxon and Norman and Dane though they be in origin. But we are not; some of the most useful American soldiers in the late war were of Japanese or German ancestry, indeed sometimes of German birth. The Americans, says Spengler, did not migrate from Europe; the people who migrated from Europe were made Americans by what happened to them after they got here. What has made us all, of whatever

ancestry, Americans is partly what has happened to us but mostly what happened to our forebears, of the mind and spirit if not of the blood. Our soldiers, certainly, were disinclined to put it into words, but it may be that there was something in all their bones, a blend of ideas no longer to be individually identified—ideas picked up God knows where, at home or at school or in the corner drugstore, ideas adding up to a conclusion whose implications are of immense importance and profound validity, but which could be and usually was expressed in the simple statement, They can't do that to us.

I could wish, as a stubborn and unreconstructed rationalist, that we were more explicit than that—could wish that this multifarious, perplexing, and often exasperating nation were more conscious of what it is doing. Others wish that too; Geroid Tanquary Robinson writes in *Foreign Affairs* that we are backing tail-first into the future. "For our own guidance at home and abroad," he says, "and for the enlightenment and inspiration of our neighbors overseas in this new age of conflict, we need to know what kind of country this is and where it is going." So, in "Day of Judgment," says David Cushman Coyle: "Though America is no doubt God's country, and in God we trust, we also trust too much to luck. Unless we know who we are and what we are after, God help us." So far He always has, but some day He might get tired.

In the meantime, however, from this generally depressing survey of the intellectual history of the past twenty-five years there emerges one conclusion indisputably supported by the evidence even though you will seldom find it expressed in any reputable literary source. Namely and to wit: You may see a lot of things you don't like, but don't sell the United States short.

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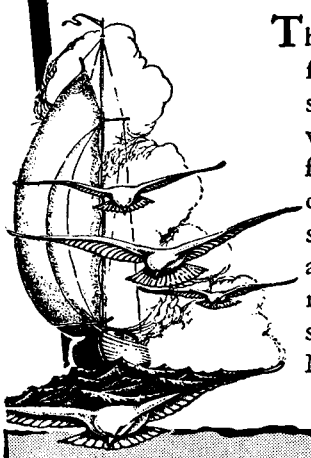

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Confessions of A Universalist

One Man's Re-education

NORMAN COUSINS

MY REASON for using the first person in these notes is that I am by age a direct product of the years under review in this issue. No man can, or perhaps should, attempt to climb far enough outside his own skin and psyche to know whether he is typical of his times. And yet, typical or otherwise, two-thirds of my chronological existence coincides squarely with the period that historians may refer to as that of the Protest Generation that became the Violent Generation before it was through.

From the moment we were born, history laid siege to our times and our affairs. Our earliest memories were of World War I, of brothers or fathers or uncles who said goodbye and who never came back, of lowered voices in the other rooms reading and rereading letters until they were leveled into rote. When we were old enough to think creatively about politics and philosophy, the Depression laid strong hands on our ideas, and the old and accepted systems of thought and politics seemed feeble and irrelevant, fit for museums or textbooks but not for the throbbing issues of the day. By the time we got out of school the word "career" had become a painful anachronism, and we grimly counted the physical and moral casualties among our friends. We were being propelled into a world which was as reluctant and unprepared to receive us as we were to become a part of it. We groped for economic footing and for intellectual anchorage. When the New Deal came along, the more conservative among us took hope and root in it, for which we were damned as timid experimentalists by our more politically adventurous contemporaries, and as irresponsible revolutionaries by our elders.

The books we read and the plays we saw and the things we talked about added up to a sort of philosophy of orphanism; to paraphrase Mr. Housman and Mr. Farrell, we were in a world we never made and there was nothing to indicate that it would ever be any different. We didn't belong, nor was there anything we really felt we wanted to belong to. When we surveyed the future it was like looking out over a frozen tundra; if the thaw ever came, we were certain it would be in some far-off age. To be sure, there was excitement over the Oxford pledge and over Marxism and over the economic interpretation of history and over the debunking of the hero. But all these were flurries and not the real thing. For the fact was that we were going through the motions of being interested when actually we ourselves lacked any real adhering surface to which ideas might stick.

The paradox, of course, was that we were being intellectually static in a politically dynamic world. This is not to say that we were unaware of or uninterested in the bulging and threatening shape of things to come. But these were things without impact; we could see them and take note of them, but they were outside us. It was like blinking at the size and speed of an oncoming locomotive while standing on the track.

Such was the curious sense of unreality and wasted motion, the sense of separation from our times, that was the dominant mood in our college years and through most of the Thirties.

It didn't last—it couldn't. But the circumstances of the awakening weren't the same in every case. Some of us emerged out of it gradually, moved along by the momentum of events; others had to be blasted out of it by the war; still others by the continuing crisis following the war. And some of us, apparently, haven't come out of it yet.

In my own case, at least, the winds that blew from the East helped to ventilate my thinking and to clear off the foggy negativism that was the fashion of the time. I remember reading in 1937, in my early twenties, about Gandhi for the first time in a form more substantial than scattered newspaper accounts. It was a book by Romain Rolland. It combined a short, highlight biography of Gandhi with an account of his spiritual and political development. The final chapters contrasted the ideas of Gandhi with those of Tagore, dramatizing the importance of this dualism in awakening India. In some respects, it was like the Hamilton-Jefferson controversy, with important elements of the philosophy of each coming together to create a vital blend. Gandhi approached mankind through India; Tagore approached India through mankind.

What impressed me most about Gandhi was not only his philosophy, impressive though it was under the special conditions in India, or the effectiveness of non-violence, for the technique was frequently at odds with the philosophy behind it. What impressed me most was the dramatic proof that the individual need not be helpless against massed power—that he need not be overwhelmed by any supposed inexorabilism or fatalism, that there was scope for free will and conviction in the shaping of society, that history could be fluid, not fixed,

(*Continued on page* 78)

—*From "A Treasury of American Prints."*

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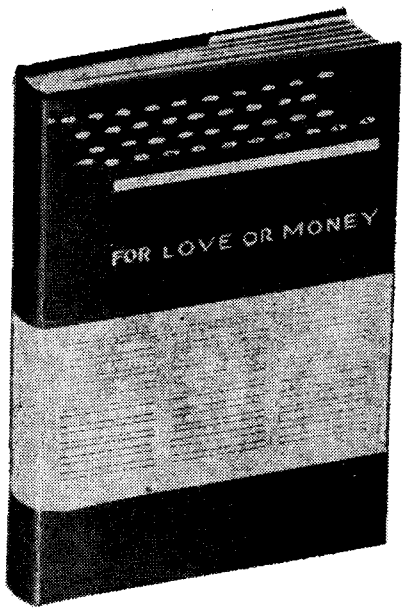

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(*Continued from page 74*)
if men were willing to transcend their egos to merge themselves with the larger body of mankind.

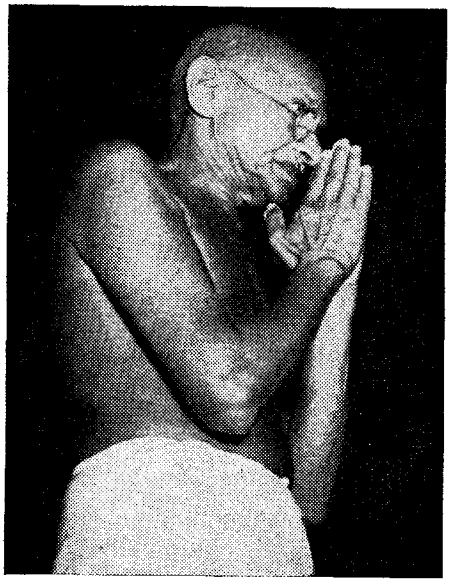
In reading Rolland it was clear that Gandhi's teaching and his non-cooperation movement were enriched and invigorated as the result of Tagore's ceaseless prodding in behalf of universalism. Tagore recognized the danger to the world of yet another purely nationalist movement. He could see that the Gandhi movement might get beyond Gandhi, that the heat generated by non-cooperation could become the fever of a national authoritarianism. India's problem, as Tagore saw it, was inseparable from the world problem. "No nation can find its own salvation by breaking away from others. The awakening of India is bound up in the awakening of the world."

* * *

LITTLE wonder that I felt foolish for having been mired so long in the futility that was the fashion of my generation. Compared to India's, our problems were as wisps of smoke alongside a thunderhead. And yet, India was moving towards freedom precisely because a philosophy compounded of affirmation, action, compassion, and universalism was giving inspiration and direction to countless millions who were learning to think about the idea of freedom for the first time.

It was natural that the momentum generated by Gandhi and Tagore should carry me back to a reappraisal of the American philosophers, and even more natural perhaps that I should begin with Emerson, with whom the Indian thinkers seemed to have such a rich affinity. What formerly had seemed to me in Emerson to be a collection of bland philosophical truisms somewhat in the lavender tradition now came alive with force and distinction. As in Gandhi and Tagore, there was the rigorous assertion of individual integrity and purpose as a foundation for service to the general welfare. There was the Gandhian disdain in Emerson for conformity and convention: "Every true man is a cause, a country, and an age; requires infinite spaces and numbers and time fully to accomplish his design; and posterity seems to follow his steps as a train of clients." Then, in a one-line distillation of the Gandhi philosophy, Emerson wrote: "Nothing can bring you peace but the triumph of principles." Dozens of others had said it before Emerson, but he brought it into rich focus.

But it was Emerson's discussion of political philosophy that drove the final nail into the coffin for my disillusion; he defined both the power and responsibility of the individual in



"History could be fluid, not fixed, if men were willing to transcend their egos."

a complex society. He saw a wide and fertile field for individual action in advancing the general welfare. He didn't believe that man, collectively or individually, need feel he was incarcerated by history. The individual did belong. No state, no custom, no convention, could alter or destroy that fact. Then, almost as though he were anticipating one of the great debates of the twentieth century—the debate over inevitability and the "wave of the future"—Emerson wrote that we were not at the "mercy of any waves of chance. . . . In dealing with the state, we ought to remember that its institutions are not aboriginal, that they are not superior to the citizen, that one of them was once the act of a single man, that every law and usage was a man's expedient to meet a particular case, that they are all limitable, all alterable."

IN terms of a working philosophy, out of this expedition in ideas and morals came the confirmation and enlargement of the doctrine not only of natural liberty but of natural scope in creating liberty. I had come a long way from the cynicism and disillusion which had soured so much of my earlier thinking. And little by little, I could see the evidence growing all around me that many others of my generation were reexamining their beliefs against the background of history on the double-quick. Nazism and nihilism were joined and mobilized and people were being killed; it dawned on many of us that notions of futility were an intellectual luxury, that the threat was alive and real, and that decisions might have to be made that we had thought need never be made again.

It was at this point that the second step or challenge in the general design of my re-education asserted itself. Admitting that there was no retreat for the individual and that he could find no refuge in fatalism or determinism, what kind of world was he trying to build—assuming the world could be saved for the rebuilding?

Just as earlier you re-examined your own place in society, and the potentiality of the individual for effective ethical action, so now you re-examined your ideas on the nature of society, on the potentialities within the group for ethical ideas and action, and, in general, on government as an organism with a metabolism rate of its own, a conscience of its own, and a life cycle of its own. Unlike the previous search, which began with Gandhi and went weaving in and out, with no fixed pattern and stretching over the entire history of ideas, this search came to rest in two areas: classical Greece and late eighteenth-century America.

In each case, what I was interested in primarily was the anatomy of error. I use the word "error" not only in the familiar sense of blunder or mistake, but in the broader sense of avoidable failure. For history can be viewed as an accumulation of error; the nature of the error and the thought proceeding out of error often determine the rate of progress and the type of progress. Indeed, the story of men and nations is largely the story of their attitude towards error. The less democratic a society, the smaller the margin for error of its subjects and the greater the margin of its rulers. The more arbitrary the definition of error, the less important the machinery of justice. The more protection error receives in high places, the less scope for public opinion and an ungoverned press.

Apart from the errors committed by the highly privileged citizens of Greece under the double standard of virtue and morality that existed between themselves and their slaves, there was the endless series of errors in the dealings between the Greek city-states themselves. The great similarities among the peoples were no bar to war; indeed, it almost seemed as though their mutualities lubricated their antagonisms. What was missing was the means of bringing order into their collective life—the life of the city-states in their relations with each other. They made the mistake of attempting to seek national security through military coalitions or balance-of-power arrangements or through conspiracy with sympathetic elements in the other countries. They made the error of not facing up to the need of federation among themselves and the need for a rule of law which federa-

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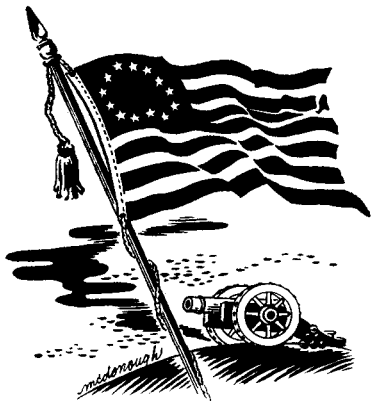
tion alone might have provided. Their leaders were unwilling to effect a larger junction except on their own terms, which is to say, domination of all others. Besides, as Madison later observed, the last place in the world to



look for the basic motive power of federation is to officialdom, for it is unreasonable to expect rulers voluntarily to turn in their seals of office and accept a lesser role; the psychology of power and leadership has little margin for subordination. The motive power for larger law would have to be supplied by the people themselves. But this, too, was lacking.

IT was the old story—old even 2,300 years ago—of the lack of specific machinery of law and law enforcement to eliminate at least that aspect of the danger that grew out of the need to be secure. And law machinery in this case meant federation. Federation might not have resolved all the ideological and economic differences, but at least it might have made unnecessary and impossible the measures leading to war that each state took as the only means of protecting itself.

This failure made a profound impression on the American federalists. The function of the Constitution makers, as Hamilton and Madison saw it, was to build "monuments" to experience. Again, the key to good government was in the approach to error. There were two broad groups of error. The first grew out of the neglect or violation of principles. The second type was on the operational or functional level and proceeded out of the fallibility of man. As they saw it, then, theirs was a dual responsibility. They had to establish framework of principle within which states could live side by side on a fairly rational basis. Next, they had to provide the people with the means of coping with error—inevitable error—by their elected and appointed officials.

On the level of principle, this meant that states within a geographic unit must have binding obligations among themselves for the greater safety of all. But these obligations were to be limited only to those matters affecting the common security and welfare. In all matters pertaining to the relationships of the states to each other, particularly when and where there were disputes, the central government was to have jurisdiction.

On the operational level, error was to be taken for granted. For no man was deemed wise enough to be free of error. The important thing was to limit the effect of those errors by depriving their makers of the natural secrecy in which errors breed and multiply. The dictator enjoys the privilege of enshrouding his errors; a democracy's chance for progress exists in direct proportion to its ability to keep errors out in the open. If one branch of the government makes the error of attempting to arrogate too much power to itself, another branch of the government should be able to correct it or at least to call public attention to it. The head of the government, for example, must remain within reach of free and open criticism. Or, if the Department of the Army acts too arbitrarily, even though the action may seem natural according to military lights, it must subject itself to public scrutiny and judgment. The general term for all this was checks and balances; more accurately perhaps, it was the error theory of government. In short, there must not only be an accounting *of* error, but an accounting *for* error.

It was natural that I should attempt to apply the experiences and the lessons of early Greece and America, particularly as they concerned federalism, to my own time. In observing the decline and fall of the League of Nations, it seemed clear that the failure to invest it with a sovereignty of its own and with effective powers had doomed it from the start, in precisely the way the Articles of Confederation were doomed and the Amphictyonic League in early Greece was doomed. This is not to say that there was any strict historical analogy between the League and the American states under the Articles. The process of federation would have been immeasurably more difficult for all the states of the world in 1939—or 1949 for that matter—than it was for the American states in 1789. But the basic principle was precisely the same; states within a geographic unit must unite or fight. Such differences and difficulties as existed in the way of federation actually defined the challenge. For these were the differences that spelled out the threat of conflict and made it critically essential to find some way to keep them from breaking out in open war.

There was no doubt that the nations were now part of a single geographic unit. The only real doubts concerned the auspices under which the attempt to coordinate the unit would be made—whether it would be done under democratic or totalitarian leadership. In short, whose world government would it be? Would it be brought about through organization or subjugation?

ALL these questions gained in volume and intensity during the war. Finally, the news broke about Hiroshima. I couldn't have been hit harder than if a report had just been flashed that the planet Jupiter had broken free of her orbit and that an interstellar collision involving the earth was possible and likely. For it seemed that man overnight had come face to face with the problems of human destiny, that he had conquered nature only to discover that forces inside him were more powerful and terrifying than any that existed outside himself. He had beaten back every natural challenge thrown his way: heat, cold, water, ice, sun, sand, and wind; but he had yet to comprehend that far more menacing was the environment he had created for himself. All at once, the planet became too small for his competitive urge and his quarrelsomeness. He had fixed a sword with the point over his heart, and he was stumbling around in a darkened arena full of pits, holes, and knee-high obstacles.

All my life I had been a gradualist; in my thoughts on universalism and world government, I had been concerned primarily with the requirements of a world community organized under law and justice, and it had seemed self-evident that it might take several generations at least before such a community could be brought into being. But with Hiroshima, it became clear that a long-range ideal had become an immediate necessity, and that no amount of talk about the difficulties in the way of this universalism could dispose of the danger of trying to survive without it. The question was not whether we needed it, but only how we would have to go about getting it within the required time.

That night—the night after the day

(*Continued on page* 173)

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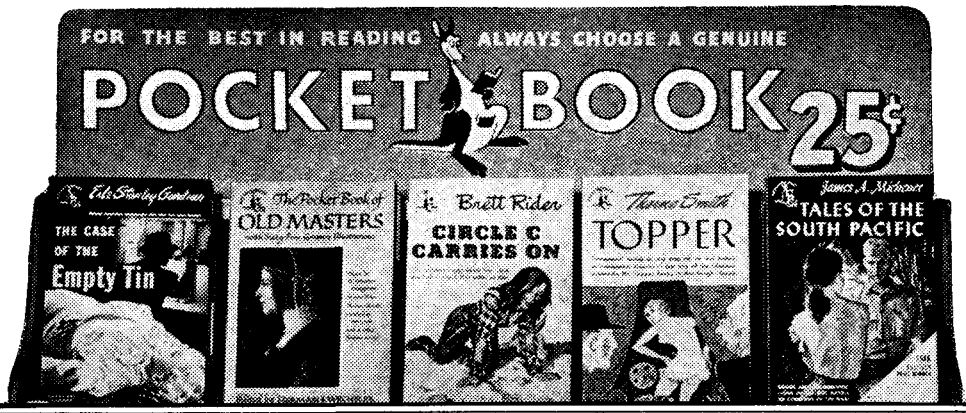
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Books Make the Times

H. A. OVERSTREET

H. A. Overstreet

TWO characteristics mark our age. The first is an unparalleled diversity. We are not a simple culture, compact and integrated, speaking a common language of things known and experienced, but a culture sprawling and unintegrated. Experiences that are worlds apart, specializations completely foreign to one another may inhabit the same city block. A refugee from Hitler's terror walks past a sedate carrier of New England culture; a worker learned in little more than his ABC's sits on a park bench next to a professor of astrophysics—or the professor of astrophysics sits next to a technician in genetics. In a movie house a member of a militant union is only a few seats removed from a union-hating executive.

This, no doubt, is our strength, that we have human resources in infinite variety. It is our guard against becoming rigid. But this, also, is our weakness, that we lack the health of a sound integration. Instead of being members one of another, we are largely strangers. Being strangers we easily move into being suspecters, fearers, enviers. Out of such strangeness can come hostility; out of hostility the tensions that characterize social neurosis. Karen Horney was discerning when she called her book "The Neurotic Personality of Our Time."

In such a Babel culture, books serve no mean function when they transform experiences unique to the individual into those that can be widely shared. Such books become culture-binders. They take a collectivity that, Humpty Dumpty-like, lies in a million pieces, and begin to make it whole.

This is what many of the war books did. Richard Tregaskis's "Guadalcanal Diary," for example, was no tale for a few hours of relaxed enjoyment. Through its straight reporting it shared with us experiences unknown in our customary life. Ernie Pyle's "Here Is Your War" and "Brave Men" reindividuated the vague, abstract mass of infantry into living human beings. Reporting the war as a personal thing, Pyle made us share its heartbreak and sodden monotony.

Agnes Keith's "Three Came Home" was another sharing—of horror and incredible endurance. This, we were given to feel, is what human stuff can be—at its arrogant, cruel, or panicky low, and at its heroic high. Out of the war, too, came that superb piece of creative reporting John Hersey's "Hiroshima." The genius of his report lay in the fact that the writer did more than describe an event; he took us into the lives of six individuals so that their experience of terror and devastation became our own. "Hiroshima" began to spell out a common language for the atomic age. This common language was extended by David Bradley's "No Place to Hide," which brought us all together in the kinship of an imminent doom and of an effort to avert that doom.

When books can do this sort of thing they make us that much less a collection of strangers.

Esther Warner, in her "New Song in a Strange Land," made a black people in Africa come alive in friendliness and affection. When she sought out the old master carver in his jungle and compared the chisel calluses on his hand with the calluses on hers, a bond was struck that took no account of race or color. Wulf Sachs did a similar thing for us in his "Black Anger." With the patience of the psychiatrist he revealed layer upon layer of the deep consciousness of John Chavafambira, medicine man of South Africa, until John became a symbol of the flaming anger of the bewildered and oppressed black men against his oppressors. Earl Koos did a similar thing for us in his "Families in Trouble." Entering into friendly relations with a number of families in the dark continent of New York's East Side, he was able, with a sociologist's perception, to make clear the sources of family weaknesses and strengths.

In a different way—that of the creative editor—B. A. Botkin in "Lay My Burden Down" made us feel, through the memories and lips of former slaves, what it meant to be a slave. Again, in a different way—that of a father—John Gunther, in "Death Be Not Proud," let us share with him the gallant spirit of his dying son.

It is worth noting that in the effort to build a shared awareness of experiences the written word has now found its supporting companion in photography. High in the list of books that build mutuality of feeling we must place Margaret Bourke-White's "They Called It Purple Heart Valley" and "Dear Fatherland, Rest Quietly," John Steinbeck's "Forgotten Village," and Erskine Caldwell's "You Have Seen Their Faces." In the same company go such "documentaries" as Pare Lorenz's "The River" and "The Plow that Broke the Plain." In such as these the age of sociological problems has found its technological ways to self-expression.

IN our tense world of fears and hostilities these are not small matters. They suggest that if we are ever to become the One World that Wendell Willkie envisioned, the oneness must be achieved through a far wider capacity than we now show to feel what others feel.

But also it will require of us a far wider capacity to know what others know. Accurate knowledge has become so specialized that the specialists cannot even talk to one another much less to such barbarians in ignorance as us laymen. Here, too, books can be culture-binders. They can bridge the gulf between specialist and specialist and specialists and laymen.

President Conant has written a much needed book, "On Understanding Science," in which he does this sort of thing. Describing what a few great scientists did—what their problems were; how they tackled and solved them—he presents science, not abstractly, as a method of observation, hypothesis-making, and the rest, but as an *experience*. In "The Life of Science," George Sarton gives us an understanding of the history, scope,

—Illustrations from "New Song in a Strange Land."

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G. K. CHESTERTON observed that there are no uninteresting subjects, only uninterested people. It was much the same conviction that influenced the editors of the Magazine of Books when they discarded the customary ideas regarding literary sections as they drew up plans in 1942 for a new literary supplement to the Chicago Sunday Tribune, then delivering a circulation of more than 1,240,000 every week.

EDITED with city desk tempo, lively in format, literate and authoritative, the Magazine of Books today is read by those who never before dipped into a literary supplement, while retaining the interest and respect of those with more seasoned literary backgrounds.

When launched, the Magazine of Books gave to the midwest a powerful new force which brought thoughtful consideration to this rich territory as one of the country's leading markets for books.

It offered for the first time attractions for the mass of the Sunday Tribune's circulation.

It opened up important new potentials for sales in the newspaper long recognized as the primary Chicago advertising medium for books and everything else associated with the class market, from stocks and bonds to world travel.

DURING the war years of expansion in book sales, the growing influence of the Magazine of Books was obscured by the generally high level of sales everywhere. As volume began to level off after the war, the receding tide revealed the midwest to be a bright spot of the nation.

For the gains achieved, Chicago bookstores and midwest jobbers attribute a major share of the credit to the much wider market for books opened up by the Magazine of Books of the Chicago Sunday Tribune.

Success in book selling, as in other fields, thrives on a keen sensitivity to trends. The biggest prizes go to those who capitalize new developments most vigorously.

Relatively, every fourth book sold in the United States is sold through a bookstore in the midwest, which accounts for 26.7 percent of the nation's bookstore sales.

With the profit in a book frequently tied up in the last 25 percent of the print-run, the sales potential in the midwest has special significance.

* * *

For publishers looking for solutions to the marketing problems of today, the opportunities offered by the midwest—and the Magazine of Books of the Chicago Sunday Tribune—suggest serious consideration and aggressive action.

As America's most widely circulated literary supplement, the Magazine of Books delivers the coverage of the midwest which publishers need in order to get their proper share of the national book business.

TOTAL NET PAID CIRCULATION: IN EXCESS OF 1,500,000

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purpose, and methods of science. This, he feels, is deeply important, for the history of science, as he sees it, is in reality, the *essential* history of mankind, since it concerns those transformative outlooks that are the cardinal events in the history of the race.

Another book of integrating insight is Stuart Chase's "The Proper Study of Mankind." In this book the author places the social sciences under review, giving to lay reader and specialist alike an understanding of the extent to which the social sciences—now so deeply needed as guides in our perplexities—have achieved enough scientific accuracy to be relied upon and of the extent to which they are still only in the hopeful stage of trying to become scientific. In this review of the social sciences Mr. Chase brings to our awareness a number of the most significant researches of recent years, researches that most of us know only singly or not at all.

"The failure of general education to date," writes Dr. Stanley A. Cain, in the *Scientific Monthly* for May 1949, "has been the failure to see our problems whole—to see engineering in relation to social science, individual problems in relation to population problems and both in relation to resources, and so on, from one class level to another, beyond state and national boundaries, from the present decade to the next century."

ARE we doing anything to overcome this failure in our general education? Happily, among other fields of effort, we can point to the newly maturing science of anthropology. In this same issue of the *Scientific Monthly* another writer, Dr. Robert W. Ehrich, lists more than 200 fairly recent titles in anthropology, most of which are readable by the lay public and all of which aim at a comprehensive understanding of our human society, from the smallest village unit to the total world. Clyde Kluckhohn's "Mirror for Man," R. H. Lowie's "Social Organization," Ruth Benedict's "Patterns of Culture," Ralph Linton's "The Cultural Background of Personality," A. Kardiner's "The Psychological Frontiers of Society," W. L. Warner's "Yankee City Series"—these are merely a few of some of the most important efforts now being made to understand our variously splintered culture.

In the spring of 1939, the *Yale Review* published an article by Julian Huxley, "The Uniqueness of Man," which set a new standard for biological thinking about our human powers. Later, this article, with a number of others of Huxley's papers, was printed in a volume entitled, in England, "The Uniqueness of Man," and in the United States, "Man Stands Alone." (This title caused one religious writer to counter with "Man Does NOT Stand Alone.") In this and subsequent books Julian Huxley's thinking has helped us to meet the fear-bringing revolutions of twentieth-century physical science with a confident twentieth-century concept of man.

Meanwhile we have needed to understand these fear-bringing revolutions of twentieth-century physical science. In a sense, we are like those

frightened people who, in the century of Copernicus, were shocked out of their senses by the removal of their planet from the center of the universe. Einstein took away our firm Newtonian foundations and made us dizzy with relativity. Then, with an equation few of us could understand, he ushered in the fateful splitting of the atom, which now threatens the end of everything—or promises the beginning of great new things.

Here, then, are important facts we need to understand, and again the books are forthcoming: Rice and Teller's "The Structure of Matter," which explains what we need to know about quantum mechanics; Karl K. Darrow's "Atomic Energy," which takes the mystification out of nuclear physics; Einstein's and Infield's "The Evolution of Physics," which tells the story of the revolution in physical science; and Philipp Frank's "Einstein: His Life and Times," which reveals the revolutionist himself and the scientific basis of his thinking. These are only a few of the many books that are coming from the presses that aim at giving understanding in this area of our bewilderment, concern, and possible hope.

A second characteristic marks our age: a deep and pervasive anxiety. Book titles indicate this: "The Predicament of Modern Man" (Elton Trueblood), "Modern Man Is Obsolete" (Norman Cousins), "Our Plundered Planet" (Fairfield Osborn), "Russia: Menace or Promise" (Vera Micheles Dean), "The Crisis in Education" (Bernard Iddings Bell), "The Nightmare of American Foreign Policy" (Edgar Ansel Mowrer), "Psychiatry in a Troubled World" (William C. Menninger).

Perhaps the title of G. D. H. Cole's book "World in Transition" gives a clue to our anxious condition. Obviously it is not one specific thing, like the atom bomb, that has caused our anxiety. Rather, it is the coming to focus of a myriad things—new scientific insights, inventions, human arrangements, human urgencies and demands—that has challenged traditional assumptions about government, world relations, property, trade, employment, education, religion, human rights.

This is perhaps the most exciting thing about us today: our anxiety shows signs of being creative. Aware that in this world of ours we have not yet learned how to live sensibly together, we seem actually to be trying to find out.

The call, in short, is for re-examination of ourselves. In October 1947, one of the wisest of our statesmen, Henry L. Stimson, wrote an article in *Foreign Affairs* which he called "The Challenge to Americans." In that article (later printed in substance in his book, "On Active Service in Peace and War,") he asked us to adopt toward the Russians an attitude neither of uncritical trust nor of unmitigated belligerence. We must learn, he said, how to disarm their fears and disappoint their hopes. If to every one of our best efforts they give an everlasting "No," we must go to work in other fields to change the frame of mind that causes that answer. We cannot ignore it.

Here was sound examination of our own tendencies to hasty, intemperate, and ill-informed response and an invitation to learn the wisdom of the middle way.

THE re-examination of our traditional social, economic, and political assumptions was the keynote of the Beveridge Plan. It is the keynote of books like Barbara Ward's "The West at Bay," Barbara Wooton's "Freedom Under Planning," John M. Clarke's "Alternative to Serfdom," and of the many vigorous books that argue for world law and world organization, like Emery Reves's "Anatomy of Peace," Cord Meyer Jr.'s "Peace or Anarchy," Quincy Wright's "World Community." To be sure, there are those, like Frederick Hayek ("Road to Serfdom"), who have feared so much the loss of old freedoms that they have not dared to envisage new freedoms, but on the whole the books that come from the presses are in no-wise reluctant to challenge social, political, and economic assumptions that, at their best, were never suf-

(*Continued on page 88*)

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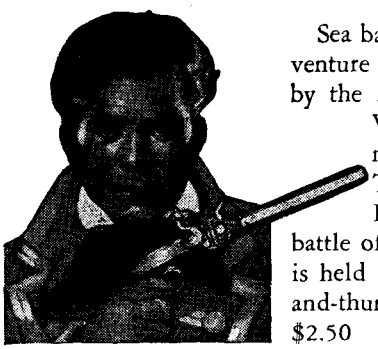

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"Skipping is an art

WHICH NOT ALL OF US HAVE MASTERED"

Excerpts from an article by J. DONALD ADAMS
in the New York Times Book Review

"MOST of us are aware that Somerset Maugham is a man of many gifts; we have heard much of his technical skill both as a playright and as a storyteller; we are frequently reminded that he is master of one of the best prose styles of our time; that he has given, in 'The Summing Up' and elsewhere, some of the best advice to aspiring young writers ever to come from an elder craftsman; we know too that he is wise in the ways of humankind. But he has still another gift of which little mention has been made; he is highly skilled in the gentle art of persuasion.

"This fact was brought home to me in reading his foreword to his collection of essays on 'the ten greatest novels of the world'. . . .

"It is not my intention to comment here on Mr. Maugham's selection of titles, other than to say that . . . it seems to me an excellent list, as easily defendable as any other. My concern at the moment is with his very plausible defense of the practice of abridgment, toward which many readers, I think, have what is perhaps an unreasonable prejudice in its disfavor. . . . I was one of them, having in mind too much, perhaps, Milton's words about a good book being 'the precious life-blood of a master spirit'. . . . But time, I think, has proved my apprehensions . . . to have been unwarranted.

"Why that is so, Mr. Maugham in some measure explains. First of all, he points out, even the greatest novels are imperfect and some carry with them into posterity no small amount of excess baggage. To take one of the greatest, Fielding's 'Tom Jones' is no whit less a great book with most of its author's moralizings removed. Cervantes' interpolated tales in 'Don Quixote' contribute nothing to his central theme and story. There are whole sections of 'War and Peace' which serve only to air the historical prejudices of Tolstoy.

"Then, too, Mr. Maugham reminds us, the nineteenth-century practice of publishing novels in serial parts, for each of which the bedeviled author had so many pages to fill, encouraged the padding of books; in France, where writers were paid by the line, they not unnaturally sometimes wrote as many lines as possible. Besides, continues the persuasive Mr. Maugham, everybody skips anyway, since our prime object in reading novels at all is, if we are sensible, entertainment; if what we want is edification and instruction, let us go to those writers in whom that purpose is paramount. So, if it be granted that most novels can be skipped, why not have the skipping done for you by someone of taste and discrimination? For there is no doubt of it—skipping is an art which not all of us have mastered."

WHAT has made each of these novels so popular down through the years? They have one point in common: absorbing stories. You want to know how things will turn out. They deal with the subjects of enduring interest to human beings: God, love and hate, death, money, ambition, envy, pride, good and evil. Each volume contains Mr. Maugham's introductory essay, presenting his reasons for considering it one of the world's great novels and explaining the author in the light of his work. Each is beautifully illustrated in full color, and black and white, by a nationally known artist. $3.50 each.

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Selected and with Introductory Essays by

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Ready in October:
WUTHERING HEIGHTS by Emily Bronte
Illustrated by Michael

WAR AND PEACE by Leo Tolstoy
Illustrated by J. Franklin Whitman, Jr.

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(Continued from page 84)
ficient to shape a sound society, and, at their worst, invited to inhumanity.

Most deeply challenging, perhaps, have been the books that ask us to re-examine our racial attitudes. Here is self-examination that goes deeper than external arrangements. It goes to the heart of what we believe about human life itself. In a very real sense, it is the re-examination of the quality of our religious faith.

If we take the books themselves as evidence, not much can be said any longer for the division into superior and inferior races. In the United States, book after book has argued the case for human equality. Gunnar Myrdal's monumental work (done in collaboration with many American scientists and scholars), "An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and American Democracy," has at last taken the racial issue out of the realm of opinionated controversy and made it into an issue of social technic. Not: *Is* there racial equality? Not: *Should* there be racial equality? But: *How and when* can racial equality be achieved? *How and when* can colonialism be changed into juster political forms? *How and when* can segregation be transformed into human neighboring?

MANY books have given weight to the new insight: Allison Davis's and John Dollard's "Children of Bondage," Otto Klineberg's "Characteristics of the American Negro," Carey McWilliams's "Prejudice," Roi Ottley's "The Story of the Negro in America," Dorothy Baruch's "The Glass House of Prejudice," Howard Odum's "The Way of the South," St. Clair Drake's and Horace R. Cayton's "Black Metropolis," Frank Tannenbaum's "Slave and Citizen: The Negro in the Americas," John Dollard's "Caste and Class in a Southern Town."

This is but a bare sampling. It indicates in no uncertain way that an old assumption about millions of our human fellows is at last on the way out.

The most remarkable thing, however, that has happened in recent years is what might be called a "return to the source." In an *SRL* editorial [May 1, 1948] Norman Cousins wrote: "In attempting to tear the mask off the cosmos, the scientist succeeded only in bringing man face to face with himself. . . . The closer man came to conquering nature, the greater his own threat to himself. It wasn't the fault of new machines or new weapons. . . . The problem was—as it always has been—man himself."

Yet this return to the source in ourselves is not the old ego-centered return that sought personal salvation. Randolph Bourne expressed the spirit of our day when he wrote, as far back as 1911, "We feel social injustice as our fathers felt personal sin."

This coming face to face with ourselves, in brief, is at the same time a coming face to face with the kind of society our immature, fear-ridden, hostility-ridden selves have created. We begin to see ourselves both as centers of life in ourselves and as foci of interpersonal relations. Harry Stack Sullivan expressed it thus in 1948: "We come into being as persons as a consequence of unnumbered interpersonal fields of force . . . and we manifest intelligible human processes only in such interpersonal fields."

This is why a book like Joshua Liebman's "Peace of Mind" belongs to a new tradition of religion and of psychiatry. Here religion and psychiatry join hands. Peace of mind is not a return of the self to the self—or to some vaguely conceived God in the Heavens. It is the peace one creates with one's fellows. This, too, is the spirit of Elton Trueblood's "Alternative to Futility," where a chief way of moving personality toward good health is found in commitment to a "fellowship of the concerned."

This, in fact, is what the psychiatrists are writing about. The resolution of "our inner conflicts" (the title, incidentally, of a book by Karen Horney) is for the purpose of making us mature men and women. Leon Saul's "Emotional Maturity" invites us to grow out of infantile and adolescent fixations into a constructive relationship with our fellows. Eric Fromm's "Man for Himself" invites us to see ourselves as capable of productive relationships through self respect. Carl Rogers's "Counseling and Psychotherapy" describes a method by which the emotionally involved, frustrated, and often hostile person can, under guidance, think his way into sound relations with his world. William Menninger's "Psychiatry: Its Evolution and Present Status" describes the coming into our age of this new tool for self-renovation. Polatin and Philtine's "How Psychiatry Helps" tells how the tool can be used.

During the late war, Franklin Roosevelt said: "Today we are faced with the preeminent fact that if civilization is to survive, we must cultivate the science of human relationships—the ability of peoples of all minds to live together and work together in the same world, at peace." The *World Federation for Mental Health* has placed this at the top of its editorial for February 1949. It is, in spirit, being placed at the top in all kinds of enterprises today. Industry and business begin to realize that sound human relations are the answer to most of our perplexing problems—see "Partners in Production," by the Labor Committee of the Twentieth Century Fund and the factual studies now appearing under the sponsorship of the National Planning Association, entitled "The Causes of Industrial Peace." Politics is almost, but not yet, at the point of realizing the importance of human relations. When statesmen become as skilled in productive human relations as they are in the shrewdness of diplomacy there will be hope.

ONE type of literature begins to stand out today as an example of creative human relations in thinking. It is the type some are calling the "multi-discipline book." "Civilization and Group Relations," edited by R. M. MacIver, is a good example. Its eleven contributors include writers from a number of disciplines: education, history, sociology, law, labor, social work, theology. "Learning and World Peace," edited by Lyman Bryson, Louis Finkelstein, and R. M. MacIver, is another. It is the finely edited report of the eighth symposium of the Conference on Science, Philosophy, and Religion. Seven volumes of a similar nature preceded it. In each of these volumes some forty or fifty specialists from different disciplines present papers which are variously commented upon back and forth by the members of the Conference. "Literary History of the United States," edited by Robert E. Spiller, Willard Thorp, Thomas H. Johnson, and Henry Seidel Canby is a significant example of many minds from various disciplines working together to create an understanding of our literary past. The book is more than forty-eight assignments to forty-eight contributors. Through the editorial device of conference after conference, in smaller and in larger groups, the book grew into shape by continuous interthinking.

Here is a way in which thinkers are learning "to live together and work together in the same world, at peace." The results may still be small, but the pattern of creative unity-in-diversity of disciplined thinking is of profound moment to our culture. In fact, it suggests a new obligation that every intelligent reader should take upon himself, namely, to seek out one book at least, or better several, where the creative intercommunication of minds is at work.

Carl Sandburg wrote:

> There are freedom shouters,
> There are freedom whisperers.
> Both may serve.

The literature of understanding that we have sampled above is quiet literature. It makes no arresting noises. But it serves.

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To believe, not as rote or strained slogan, but as rigid fact, that a magazine is by natural right the property of its readers;

That, because of this, editors are but temporary custodians, their tenure related to and dependent upon their confidence in the judgment and intelligence of the reader;

That such confidence is best established by avoiding both the condescension of talking down and the presumption of talking up;

That a magazine, like a person, requires, in order to be effective, certain qualities—readily identifiable and beyond obliteration;

That high among these qualities is a response to values, the capacity to create values, and the passion to defend values;

That other essential qualities include clarity, curiosity, insight, incisiveness, integrity, good taste, good will, conviction, responsibility;

That what is written is believed by the writer and written to be believed by the reader;

That the magazine should reflect a sense of adventure and excitement about life in general and about books and ideas in particular;

That honest sentiments, honest passions, and honest indignations are among the highest expressions of conscience, that there is no need to feel shy or awkward or embarrassed in their presence, and that they are not to be waved aside by mock austerics;

That cynicism at best is a waste of time; at worst, a dangerous and potentially fatal disease for individuals and civilizations both;

That ideals are the main business of writers, and that people will respond to ideals far beyond the anticipations of their nominal leaders;

That believing all this need neither limit nor inhibit a sense of fun and the enjoyment of laughter;

That editing, finally, is not paring but creating.

—N. C.

The End of Innocence

FOR more than 300 years the frontier afforded America an outlet for its energies, but by the outbreak of the First World War the wilderness had been conquered and the nation was developing a homogeneous—what many were beginning to call a standardized—civilization from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The regional isolation which, during the era in which transport and traffic were spasmodic and difficult, had preserved singularities of speech and custom in remoter sections of the country, was yielding to the mobility brought about by the automobile, while opinion, played upon by the radio and the motion picture, and so less influenced than before by the time lag, was discovering new shortcuts to a common denominator of opinion.

Up to the instant of war the most striking characteristic of America had been the uninterrupted course of its success and the confidence with which it looked to the future. The war disclosed two things in particular to America: it made even more patent than before the enormous strength latent in the nation, and, in the disillusionment which followed the return of the soldiers, it revealed the shortcomings of American civilization. So far as its strength was concerned, America for the moment at least looked upon it as a cause for pride rather than as a reservoir of military power likely to be drawn on in the near future. With all the rest of the world, the nation was weary of adventure. It had known excitement on a scale which nothing short of future war could parallel and beside which all other feats of prowess must seem pallid. Two fields in especial, however, still offered drama, the new science and the new psychology. The latter, in particular, in the light of the breakdown of civilization seemed of enormous pertinence, and interest focussed with intensity on the study of human conduct, on the motives which influenced and the circumstances which conditioned behavio:

When *The Saturday Review of Literature* was born in 1924, it came into a period quick with emotion and opinions and into a society which believed, at least for the moment, that the world and democracy had been made safe for each other. Whatever confusions and doubts there were as to policies, however sharp the differences as to ideologies, no matter how violent the rebellion of youth against the taboos of Victorianism or how barbed its attacks upon the national complacency, neither youth nor age doubted that the future of civilization was theirs for the shaping. The possibility that science, with its spectacular new achievements in the automobile, the airplane, the radio, and the motion picture, might within a quarter of a century threaten the very existence of mankind, had place only in the imaginations of the romancers. For the world, despite the toll of war, was moving into a new order which promised peace for all and plenty for the righteous.

New ideas were all about and old beliefs were potent to move. In the wake of war had come a revival of interest in religion, a natural concern with spiritualism and the likelihood of survival after death, and a livelier social conscience. Einsteinian physics was fructifying and revising science, Freudian psychology had captured the public imagination, the political doctrine of the new Russia had invaded liberal thought. To believe in Communism then was to hold to a purely ideological faith, one bitterly attacked, to be sure, as foreign to the American way of life but untainted by suspicion of subservience to an alien power.

The intellectual world was astir with excitement. Old shibboleths were attacked, new theories were broached, space was contracted by the airplane, time bent back on itself by physics, technology was daily disclosing new marvels, social science was using new methods of investigation. The American political world had suddenly expanded from the national to the international. Literature, breaking out in a rash of experiment, and sloughing off the shackles of Victorian gentility, was venturing into hitherto forbidden territory and producing a mental climate in which cobwebs of custom were blown away and the fashion of American thinking bent to new patterns.

Writing felt the quickening all along the line. New magazines sprang into being: *The Dial*, *The New Republic*,

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The Freeman, the reconstructed *Nation* served as springboards to discussion of more radical opinion; *Time,* alert to meet the challenge in the broadening interest in public affairs, invented a novel formula for the presentation of the news; "little" magazines, offering opportunity to the experimentalists, sprouted like mushrooms on all sides, while staid periodicals like *Harper's* and *The Atlantic Monthly,* reflected the growing tolerance of frank speaking, and a less staid one like *The American Mercury* became the hallmark of liberalism. Biography, undertaking the task of reappraisal, and employing the findings of the new psychology, entered upon an era of debunking only now going into reverse. History, already being written with emphasis on the economic as well as the political and the military, laid increasing stress on the interrelationships of nations and the impact of events in one land on those in all others. Poetry boldly proclaimed its independence of classical restrictions and broke into free verse, frequently deriving its material from sources hitherto always regarded as prosaic. And fiction, fertilized by Freudianism and energized by the lifting of the reticence which had cast a false glamour over the American scene, set itself on the one hand to exploring the secret places of the soul and on the other to picturing the American environment with a realism as unsparing as it was sometimes warped. Regionalism came into literature. The novel of the soil, the saga, often a lament, of the small town, broke into fiction.

To be young then was hardly heaven—there were too many maimed in body and soul for that—but to be young was to be panoplied in an incandescence of spirit which sprang of the disillusionment with the past and of determination for the future. The tragedy which their fathers, in their smug reliance on the security of a world of constantly increasing material benefits, had bequeathed to them, the sons were determined not to pass on to their children. Hence the heat of their attack upon the society in which they had come to manhood, their concentration upon the cankers of American life, and the bitterness of their onslaught on conventions. The early Twenties were aflame with the revolt of youth, with protests that in the habit of youth often knew neither measure nor patience. Yet, if in the intensity of their reaction to the discrepancy between the America of their dreams and of the reality "the sad young men" frequently lost perspective, by their indignation they lent a compulsive energy to American thought in general.

It was a world of brave hopes, this which lasted for a few years after the First World War. Coolidge prosperity and Hoover depression wore it down, and even before the unbelievable threat of a new war began to cloud the horizon the intellectual steam the early Twenties had generated had all but evaporated. The rebellion against manners and morals, so violent and invigorating in its beginning, had shot its bolt. Thenceforward America marched through depression and war to the uncertain present. What survived from the turmoil of the Twenties was a new conception of America, a bolder and more understanding curiosity as to what constitutes the springs of human conduct, a distrust of appearances, and a higher seriousness in both life and literature.

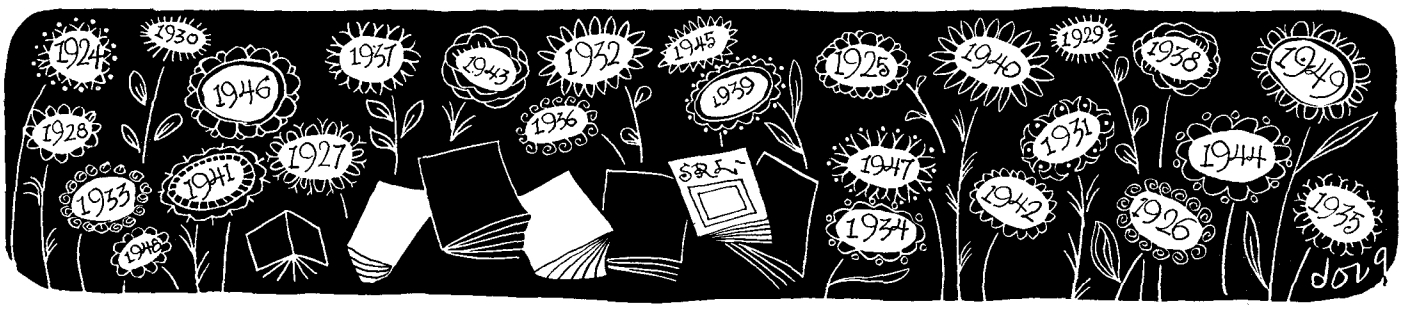
America's age of innocence is gone. Still the fortunate land, blest above all others in well-being and opportunity, it no longer conceives that Utopia lies around the corner or that the world is moving on toward the millennium. Those confident beliefs of yesterday lie buried in the ruins of the Second World War and the havoc wrought by the atom bomb. In the quarter century in which *The Saturday Review* has attempted to mirror the passing scene through literature, the mood of the nation has changed from assurance to anxiety, at times even to fear. Wisdom is still wanting as to how to meet the problems of the day, but at least knowledge has come that only by the abandonment of its vaunted isolation, only by accepting responsibility in the councils of the nations, can America realize its ineradicable faith in a world in which freedom and peace are the portion of all. In that faith it links today to yesterday. —A.L.

The Unpromising Years

THE widely expressed disillusionment with the literature that has followed the war has been based on two major premises. We believed that the writers of the Twenties and Thirties who had brought the American novel out of the doldrums had come to a dead end even before the conflict began, but that new writers would emerge who would reevaluate in the terms of their experiences a glittering new world in which America, abandoning provincialism, must become the leader of the democratic nations in the establishment of permanent peace. The blind American optimism that had once been epitomized in the phrase "God's own country" was mercilessly destroyed by writers after the First World War, who in so doing created a vital literature that was soon read around the world. It was rapidly accepted in this country for what it was, a creative and affirmative effort to establish new values for American thought and life. The rubbish and the ruins of nineteenth-century traditions had to be cleared away before the new structure could be built. One after another of the old shibboleths fell. With the zeal of old-time missionaries amongst the heathen, H. L. Mencken, Sinclair Lewis and the rest set to work to cleanse the nation in the names of the eighteenth-century god of reason and the new god of science.

Unhappily our writers found nothing to substitute for the temples that had been cast down. It was soon apparent that once clear objectives of victory were an illusion. The Russian Revolution became a menacing Communist state; the new German democracy was a failure; the independence of small nations was not guaranteed by the destruction of the German and Austrian empires. Chaos was beginning to take the place of an ordered peace before the stock market crashed in 1929 and the following depression poisoned the springs of hope. An affirmative literature could not exist in the atmosphere of broken promises and lost hopes. There followed the experiments in self-analysis, mysticism,

(*Continued on page* 165)



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The American Blend

Regional Diversity and National Unity

HOWARD W. ODUM

ABOUT ten years ago, Constance Lindsay Skinner wrote that "if the average American is less informed about his country than any other national, knows and cares less about its past and about its present in all sections but the one where he resides and does business, it is because the books prepared for his instruction were not written by artists. Few artists have displayed to him the colors and textures of the original stuff of American life; or made him comrades of the folk who came from the crowded civilizations of the old world and entered the vast wilderness of the new by all its shining rivers; or thrust him, as one of them, into the clash of spirit with circumstance under the green arches of beauty, from which emerge the democratic ideal and American individuality."

Somewhat earlier, a Nobel Prize winner of 1939, wrote about eternal yearnings based upon diversity and the quest for unity. As isolation makes for difference, so "difference makes for comparison, comparison gives rise to uneasiness, uneasiness to wonderment, wonderment tends to admiration, and finally admiration turns to a yearning for mutual exchange and unity." But not alone did Thomas Mann write of the power of the regional folk culture of peoples but with his master compatriot of two centuries ago, J. W. von Goethe, and Thorstein Veblen, master critic of a later century, he could predict that a great people, strong in the diversity of their regional folk cultures, would become weak and destroy their nation through technological standardizations and the lust for centralized power. Goethe's formula for unity and a vanishing of hatreds was to rise to a plane where "one feels the weal or woe of a neighboring people as intimately as if it were one's own."

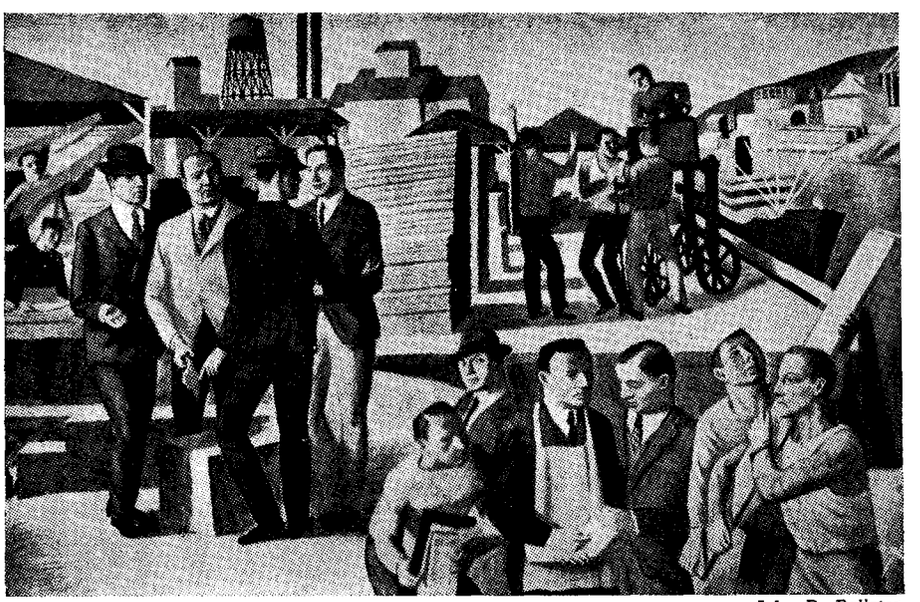
Here then is the quest for what Lewis Mumford has recently called the new regionalism as opposed to the old professional localism, or what we have identified as sectionalism after the manner of Frederick Jackson Turner's earlier designations. The first is the quest for the understanding of this perennial puzzle, the unpredictable and immeasurable American culture. The second is the conceptualization and role of regionalism in the processes of differentiation and integration so essential to the living cultures of the ever-changing "one nation," "one world" society. The third is the increase of knowledge and sympathetic understanding, one folk and region of another, and the clearing up of certain misconceptions about regionalism itself; and the fourth is to weave a construct that will give living physical areal tabernacles for the folk cultures of the world to maintain a quality culture in a quantity world.

There are ways for the asking "to prove this puzzle," not only of the first new world, but the vastly more complicated new world of America at mid-century, 1950 and later. For even Walt Whitman's "vistas of glory incessant and branching," or the dreams of the founding fathers, or the predictions of the frontier scientists and inventors are immeasurably short of America's attainment in economic wealth, in material power, in technological achievement, in potential world leadership, or even in the extraordinary richness and diversity of regional development and the potentials for integration and unity of the total American configuration of culture and economy. Yet what was so freely predicted as the melting pot waywardly developed a nation of multiplied diversities as well as conflicting ideologies and powerful differences to be resolved. Indeed, where Walt Whitman heard America singing "with open mouths their strong melodious songs," "solitary," striking up for a new world of unity, one can hear America now quarreling and challenging all the strategy of an unbelievably complex America still, "Each singing what belongs to him or her and none else." And all this diversity of folk and region, commonly characterized as the most diverse culture yet recorded in history, has come as the fruit of America's quest for freedom and liberty, for democracy of equality in all things, for the spiritual quest for all the freedoms, even as the United Nations sets its goals of universal freedom.

AND we hear again that one asked for something to prove this new world not only to Americans, now 150 million strong, but to all those who seek to understand us, coming from the folk cultures of Europe and Asia and Africa, complaining of our inconsistencies and contradictions but honestly seeking the answers to their troubled quests. The answers for both Americans and the others are to be found in the complexities of a rich American diversity of folk and region, set in the pattern of the architecture of universal culture and made increasingly articulate through communications and the ideologies of one world inter-cultural relations.

But how is it possible to understand so easily and so quickly so complex a configuration of regional folk and culture? There are several ways. First, there is the formal study of American civilization in the university and in

(*Continued on page* 96)



—*John R. Ballator.*

"Local Industries," fragment of a mural in the St. Johns (Oregon) Post Office.

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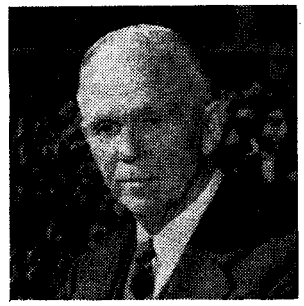

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(*Continued from page* 92)
the history books. At Yale, at Harvard, at Cornell, at North Carolina, at Wisconsin, at Oklahoma, at California, and in many other centers, the study of American culture features the regional factors. Increasingly also, the standard texts and series on American history interpret the regional structure of American society. From all these studies it must be clear that realistic Americanism was grounded in the physiographic measures of the continent and in the adaptation of the people to the places where they lived. This was true not only because of the extraordinarily wide range and kinds of natural phenomena but because of the sheer size of an America in which all Western Europe, so to speak, could be lost in her mountain fastnesses or river valleys or great plains. In this happy convergence of a superabundance of natural wealth and human wealth was to be found the measures of both the nation's extraordinary strength and power as well as her growing pains and sectional conflict.

Another way of "proving this puzzle" of American culture, however, is through the study of the literature of regionalism and the folk. Here, within very recent times, America has provided extraordinary rich source materials, including many periodicals and the numerous regional and folk series of books. *The Saturday Review* itself, through its editorials, its reviews, and six special regional issues on the Southwest, the Upper South, the Deep South, the Ohio Valley, New England, and California, has led the way.

Two of the most significant regional series of books, the "Rivers of America" and the "Folkways Series," may well illustrate. The thirty-eighth "River" book has appeared in a series rich in regional portraiture of the total culture. For instance, in the Northeast are the St. Lawrence, the Delaware, the Brandywine, the Hudson, the Kennebec, the Winooski, and the Twin Rivers: the Raritan and the Passaic. In the Southeast are the Lower Mississippi, the Kentucky, the Tennessee, the Arkansas, the Shenandoah, the Suwanee, and the James. In the Middle states are the Illinois, the Chicago, the Upper Mississippi, the Wisconsin, the Sangamon, and the Wabash. In the Southwest are the Santa Fe, the Lower Mississippi. In the Northwest are Powder River, the Red River, the Kaw, the Missouri, and the Colorado. In the Far West are the Sacramento, the Salinas, the Humboldt, the Columbia.

THROUGH the "Folkways Series" it is possible to map much of the total nation in folk-regional units, shading like culture areas into each other in a fascinating fabric with warp and woof of subregional cultures. Here are some of the quilted patterns: "Golden Gate Country," "Town Meeting Country," "North Star Country," "Deep Delta Country," "Far North Country," "Mormon Country," "Palmetto Country," "Desert Country," "Pinon Country," "The Lakes Country," "Short Grass Country," "Ozark Country," "Blue Ridge Country," "High Border Country," "Southern California Country," "Canoe Country," "Snowshoe Country."

In addition to these there are perhaps no less than a baker's dozen other series, including those on lakes and mountains, cities, states, special culture areas, folklore, architecture, travel. In addition to these, scores of books discuss how the people live, where they live, what they do, what they say, and what they sing.

Here at last is a patterning of American culture into one composite fabric of great richness and beauty. Yet, the most intimate regional literature is, after all, the extraordinary wealth of regional fiction, the catalogue of which would constitute a book of American literature. Even samplings would extend this treatise beyond its authorized limits, although one may quote an enthusiastic reviewer's estimate of Walter Van Tilburg Clark's "The Track of the Cat" as justifying the new American regionalism, provided he will document the even richer contributions of the earlier regionalists, Mary Ellen Chase, William Faulkner, Ellen Glasgow, Gertrude Atherton, Edna Ferber, Sinclair Lewis, as well as a host of new regionalists.

There are still other ways of proving this puzzle of the American culture. The best of these is through first-hand observation by highway routes, by railway travel, and by airways that give sweeping views and symbols not otherwise attainable. This is, of course, a "must." Yet one of the most talked-about recent volumes on America written by observers from abroad asserts that it has no portraiture beyond the Eastern Seaboard and its immediate hinterlands. The limitations here are also apparent. For many observers see only a superficial part of the folk and their culture. They see not what the folk are but what is observed through their own cultural cameras. They marvel at the commonplace, as if it were something new and rare. They see the folk for the first time but do not understand them, sentimentalizing over the simple things and trying to be hard-boiled over the general realities of life. Yet there is no substitute for the first-hand picture of America on the three level routes of highways, railways, and the airways. Here, again, amazing vistas are being opened to the millions of interregional visitors who move hither and yon in a new American cavalcade, complaining of poor railroads, bad food, but having a wonderful time and getting acquainted with that great diversity which is America.

Our second and third quests are

(*Continued on page* 169)

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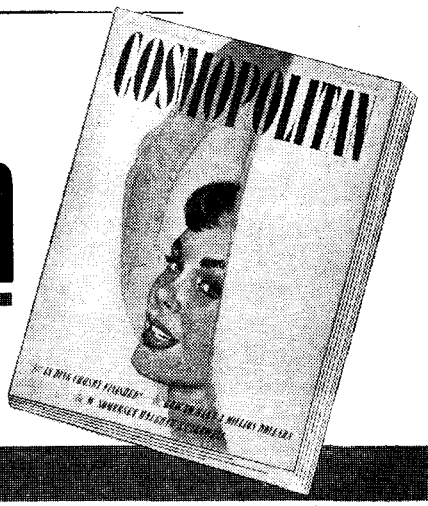

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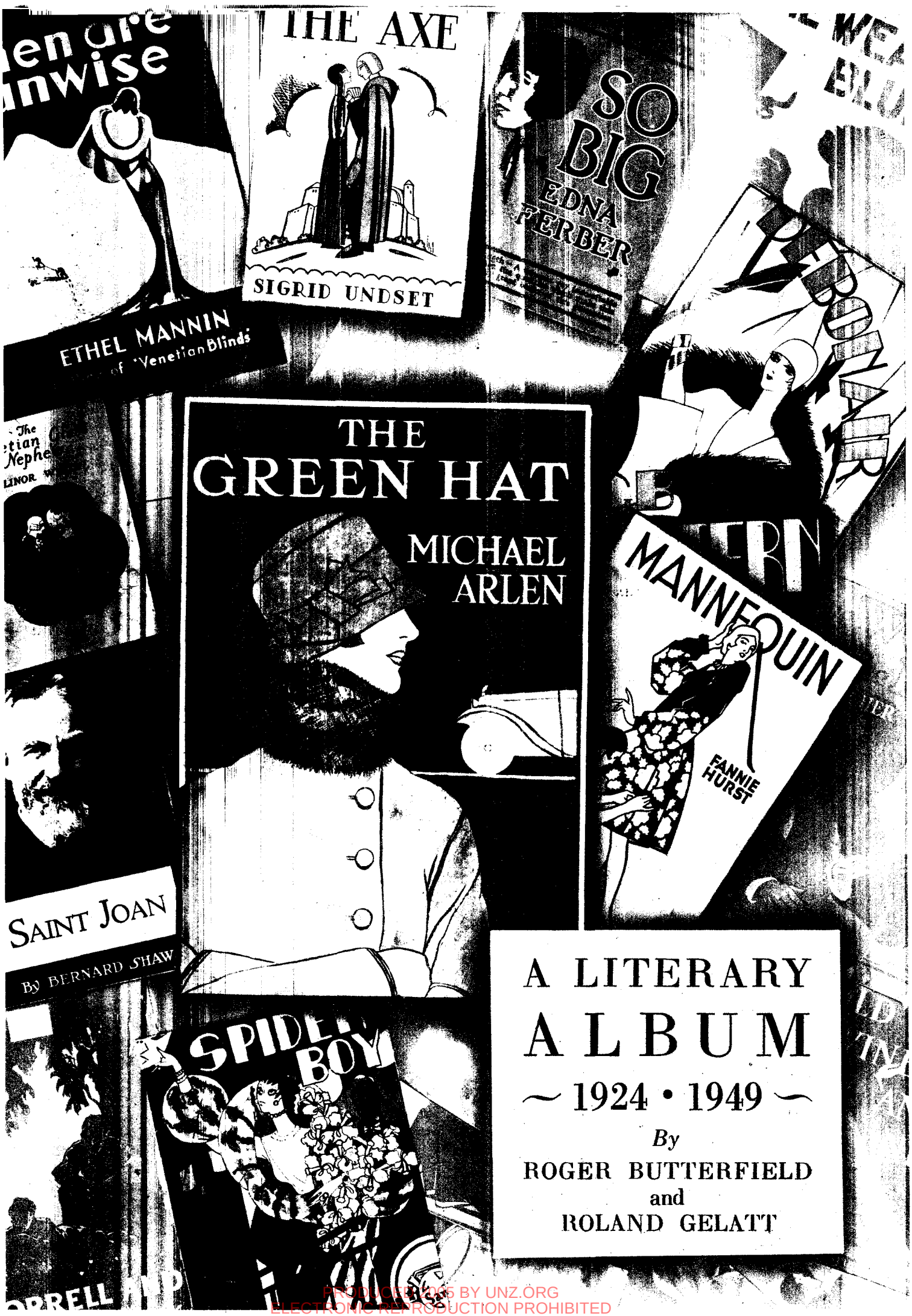

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John Hersey, circa 1949. "Hiroshima" described the decisive moment when atomic warfare came.

From BABBITT *to the* BOMB

IT WAS on an April morning in 1920 that the usually genial George F. Babbitt came down to breakfast in his Zenith home in a grumpy and pessimistic mood. (He had been playing poker the night before at Vergil Gunch's, and was suffering from a severe hangover, marked by a spinning head, a rising stomach, and an inability to coordinate his shaving materials.) Four years later, when SRL began its career, Babbitt was the best known character in modern American fiction, and he probably still is, in 1949. But we have grown much more tolerant of Babbitt as the years have passed—one might almost say that we have come to love him. As a name, as a symbol, as a target, he has been indispensable. And when you compare him with some of the other personalities who have dominated various parts of the world in the last quarter of a century, Babbitt seems like a pretty decent guy.

If Babbitt was able to live down the family crisis with which Sinclair Lewis ended his novel, the year 1924 must have been one of the happiest he ever knew. Real estate, which was his game, was booming; so was the stock market, in which he had begun to dabble; normalcy reigned in the White House in the wizened Yankee person of President Calvin Coolidge. The statesmen who guided the nation were safely Republican and strongly pro-business, and the little handful of Communists, Socialists, or what-have-you —they were all "Reds" to George F. Babbitt—who had raised their heads after the war had been driven back into obscurity.

But if Babbitt and his Zenith cronies were complacent about the state of the nation in 1924, American writers, as a whole, were not. By far the most influential books of the period were those in which criticism of some aspect of American life was the dominant note. The pace had been set at the beginning of the decade by Sherwood Anderson and Sinclair Lewis. "Winesburg, Ohio" (1919) and "Main Street" (1920), though dissimilar in almost every other respect, were both concerned with the futilities and frustrations of existence in a middle-class, Middle West town. Theodore Dreiser's "An American Tragedy" (1925), a ponderous but powerful book, indicted the whole of American society for turning one young man into a murderer.

In 1924 H. L. Mencken and George Jean Nathan were already cutting broad satiric swaths through the corn, cotton, and Bible belts. W. E. Woodward had thoroughly exposed the hucksters of the 1920's—and popularized the useful word "debunk"—in his hilarious novel "Bunk" (1923). F. Scott Fitzgerald was doing the same thing (though with no crusading intent) for the hypocrisies of prohibition and the follies of the idle rich. Ring Lardner was writing his cruel but amusing vignettes of Broadway characters and baseball players. And John Dos Passos, who had published an anti-war novel, "Three Soldiers," in 1921, was gathering material for his vast panorama of protest, "U.S.A." (1930-36).

With the arrival of the great depression in the 1930's, this kind of writing naturally became more insistent. Babbitt and his fatuities were buried (though not permanently) in the collapse of the Big Bull Market; starvation, mass unemployment, and physical brutality took their place. Of the many nov-

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els which partook of these themes, the one which reached the widest audience and cut the deepest into the national consciousness was John Steinbeck's "The Grapes of Wrath" (1939). This somber odyssey of a dispossessed Oklahoma farm family was so compelling that Hollywood overcame its usual scruples against "unpleasant" stories and converted it into a memorable film.

Of course, not all the important American writers were occupied with protest during this period. In the 1920's a good many of them simply went abroad and ignored the jazz age. Others stayed home and wrote affectionately of the things they liked—Willa Cather of archbishops and pioneers, Edna Ferber of showboats and cowboys, for instance. With the publication of Thomas Wolfe's "Look Homeward, Angel" (1929) a significant new note was sounded. Poets and politicians had long been accustomed to expressing their patriotism in public. But prior to Wolfe, no first-rank American novelist had made sheer love of country a principal theme.

In 1928 Stephen Vincent Benét published "John Brown's Body," a long narrative poem about the Civil War, in which American history itself became a kind of hero. This theme of the love of America, for itself and/or its storied past, characterized the work of Carl Sandburg, Archibald MacLeish, and other poets, biographers, and writers of fiction in the 1930's. The historical novelists, in particular, conducted a relentless search of every nook and crevice of the national archives for story material.

In John P. Marquand's "The Late George Apley" (1937), Americans discovered a new kind of upper-crust Main Street tucked away in Boston's Back Bay. Marquand's gentle satires of life among the Eastern seaboard station-wagon set continued to find a wide audience in the 1940's, but the bulk of American writing during the last ten years was affected more by a desire to escape—into religion, into the past, into pure entertainment and belly laughs—than to criticize or comprehend the contemporary scene. Several younger writers who had been in the war produced exciting books about it, and one of these, Norman Mailer's "The Naked and the Dead" (1948), seemed likely to stand as the "Three Soldiers" of World War II. But in general the critics seemed to agree that no American book of the war or immediate postwar years could compare with the best of Lewis, Anderson, Fitzgerald, Dreiser, or Dos Passos.

The truth of this opinion—and the reasons for it, if true—will probably not be known for years to come. Among the explanations offered are fear, the unsettled condition of the world, and the collapse of the old American concept of secure isolation. One of the most influential books of the period has certainly helped to impress all these things on the American mind. John Hersey's "Hiroshima" (1946) was not fiction, but a true and simply written account of some Japanese people who lived in Hiroshima before and after the first atomic bomb was dropped. It was a long way from Zenith, U.S.A., to the smoldering streets of Hiroshima in 1945, but some American writers have managed to make the journey and to begin the task of understanding it. —R.B.

Sherwood Anderson, already a dominant influence when SRL was born. "Winesburg, Ohio" (1919) brought new freedom to American literature.

"An American Tragedy" appeared in 1925. For a quarter-century Theodore Dreiser had been writing novels on the ruthlessness of American life.

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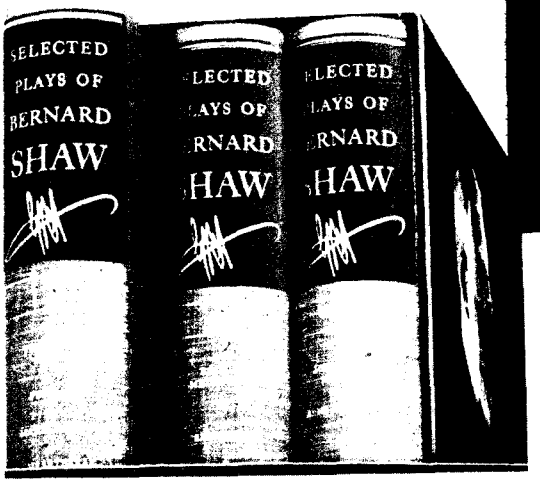

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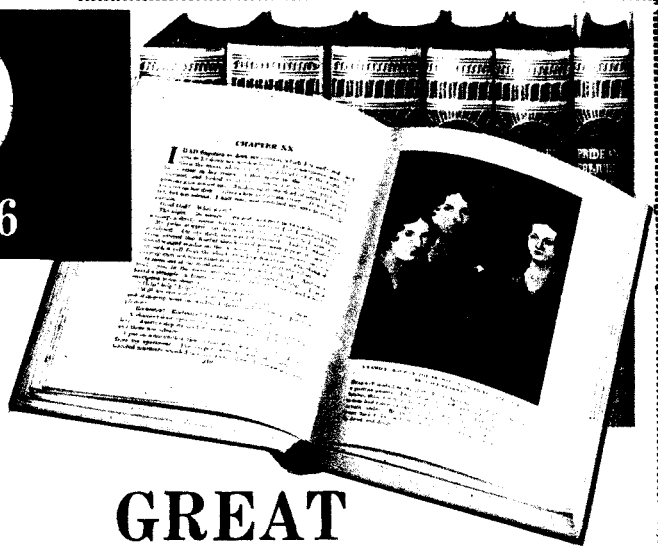

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Edna St. Vincent Millay in 1920 advised young intellectuals to burn their candles at both ends.

Texas Guinan held the same philosophy. However, her application of it tended to be less ethereal.

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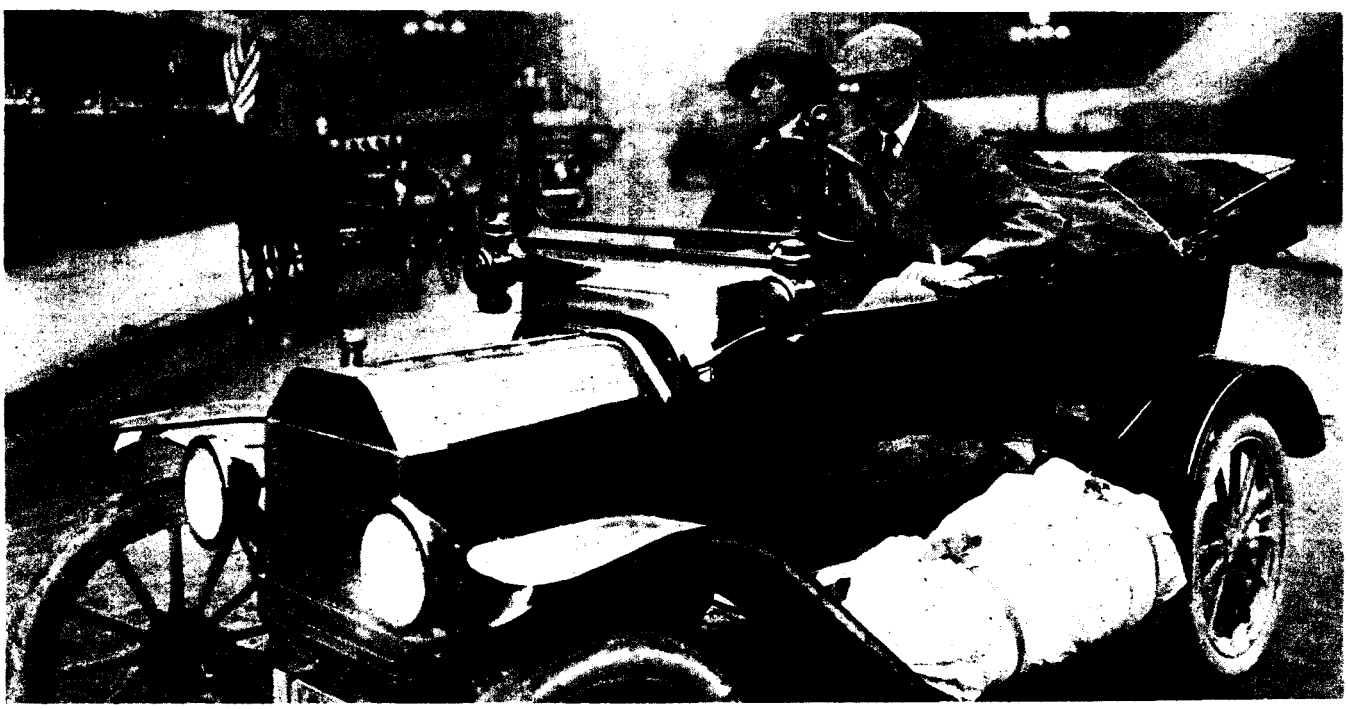
MEN-OF-THE-HOUR. General Leonard Wood with President Coolidge in South Dakota. Wood, defeated aspirant for Presidential nomination in 1920, supported Coolidge in 1924.

MAN-WITH-A-SLINGSHOT. Sinclair Lewis's brilliant novels ridiculed the society which Calvin Coolidge so ideally represented. Main Street is pictured here in its vintage year of 1920.



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This advertisement appeared in the first issue of *The Saturday Review of Literature*, August 2, 1924

"The Eighth Lively Art"

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The Eighth Lively Art

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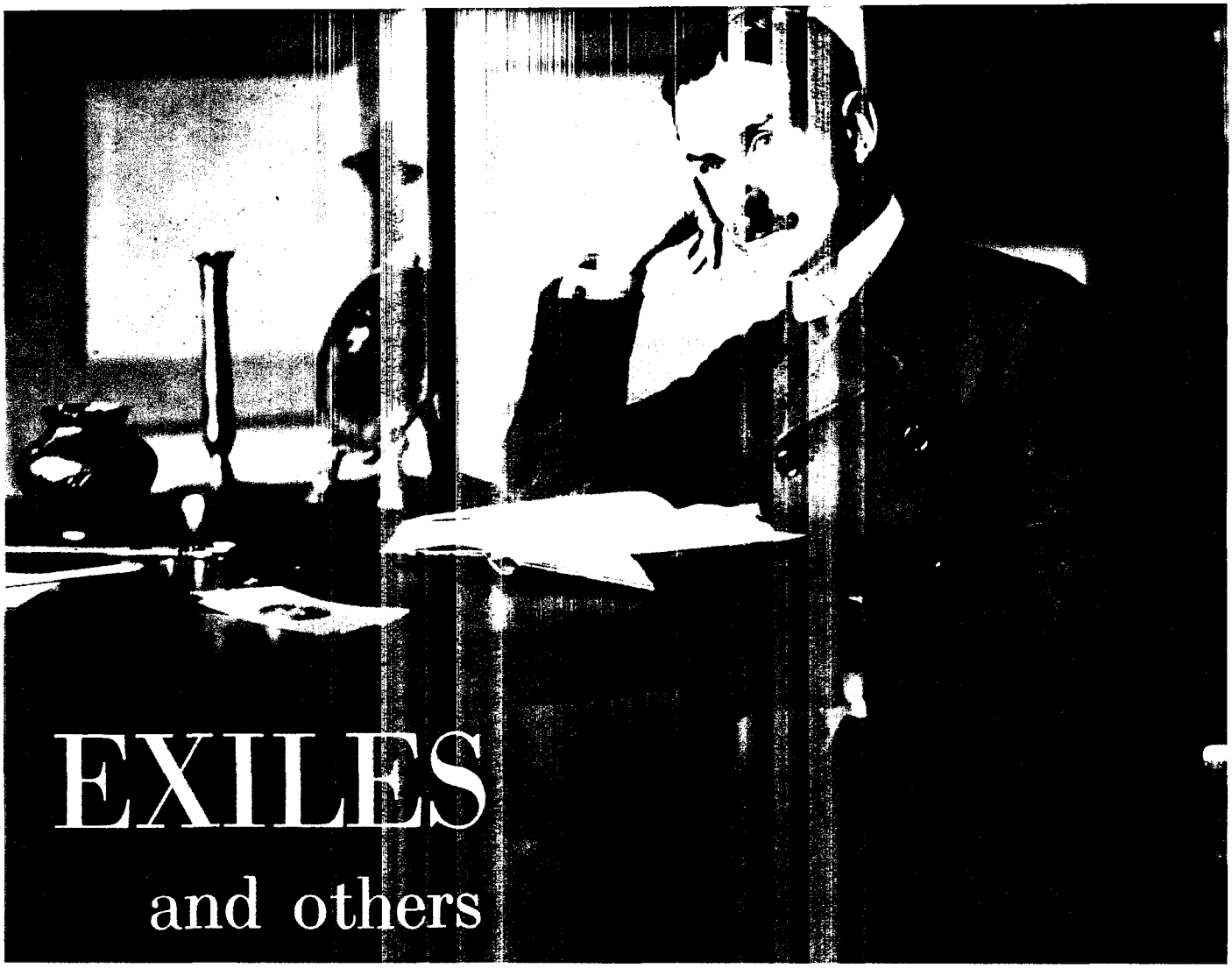

EXILES and others

Thomas Mann at the time of his early triumphs in Germany. His reputation in America began with "The Magic Mountain" in the late Twenties. Mann left Germany in 1933, now lives in California.

IF writers of the Twenties had one thing in common, it was disgust with what they felt to be the complacent, arid, and materialistic status quo. Those of the Lewis-Mencken persuasion stayed at home to satirize their society. Others sought the relief of exile—either spatial or spiritual. Transatlantic steamers were filled with intellectuals who steadfastly maintained that "They do things better in Europe." About Gertrude Stein in Paris there gathered a devoted circle of young people with literary aspirations, at least a few of whom found the Parisian atmosphere invigorating. Some of the period's best literature was conceived in expatriation.

Those who did not venture abroad achieved exile of a sort by withdrawing into themselves and cultivating a regionalism which was every bit as effective an insulation from Babbittry as the boulevards of Paris.

No sooner had the mode for expatriation begun to ebb than Hitler came to give it a renewed and terrible urgency. But this time the movement was westward—for Americans abroad and Europeans both. As the Nazi menace assumed increasing proportions, more and more European writers found sanctuary in America. Many remained to become citizens, adding immeasurable vitality to our cultural life.

James Joyce made music with words and explored subtle involutions of the human mind.

St. Louis boy who went British. T. S. Eliot's "Waste Land" (1922) was taken for scripture.

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Matthew Josephson started out as a Paris expatriate, returned to chronicle American history.

As a young man John Dos Passos was preoccupied for the most part with Spanish culture.

Ezra Pound in Paris, 1923. He left U.S.A. in 1908, carried expatriation to its furthest degree.

William Faulkner resisted the literary exodus to Europe, preferring his native Oxford, Miss.

Ernest Hemingway, a great success by 1934, was often seen aboard transatlantic steamers.

Robinson Jeffers found refuge on California's windy coast, poetized gloomily on man's fate.

Gertrude Stein lectured throughout the United States in 1934. Alice B. Toklas accompanied her.

Thomas Wolfe visited Berlin in 1936. However far he wandered, Wolfe looked homeward to America.

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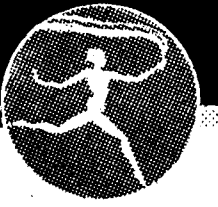

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ON SALE AT ALL BOOKSTORES IN AMERICA

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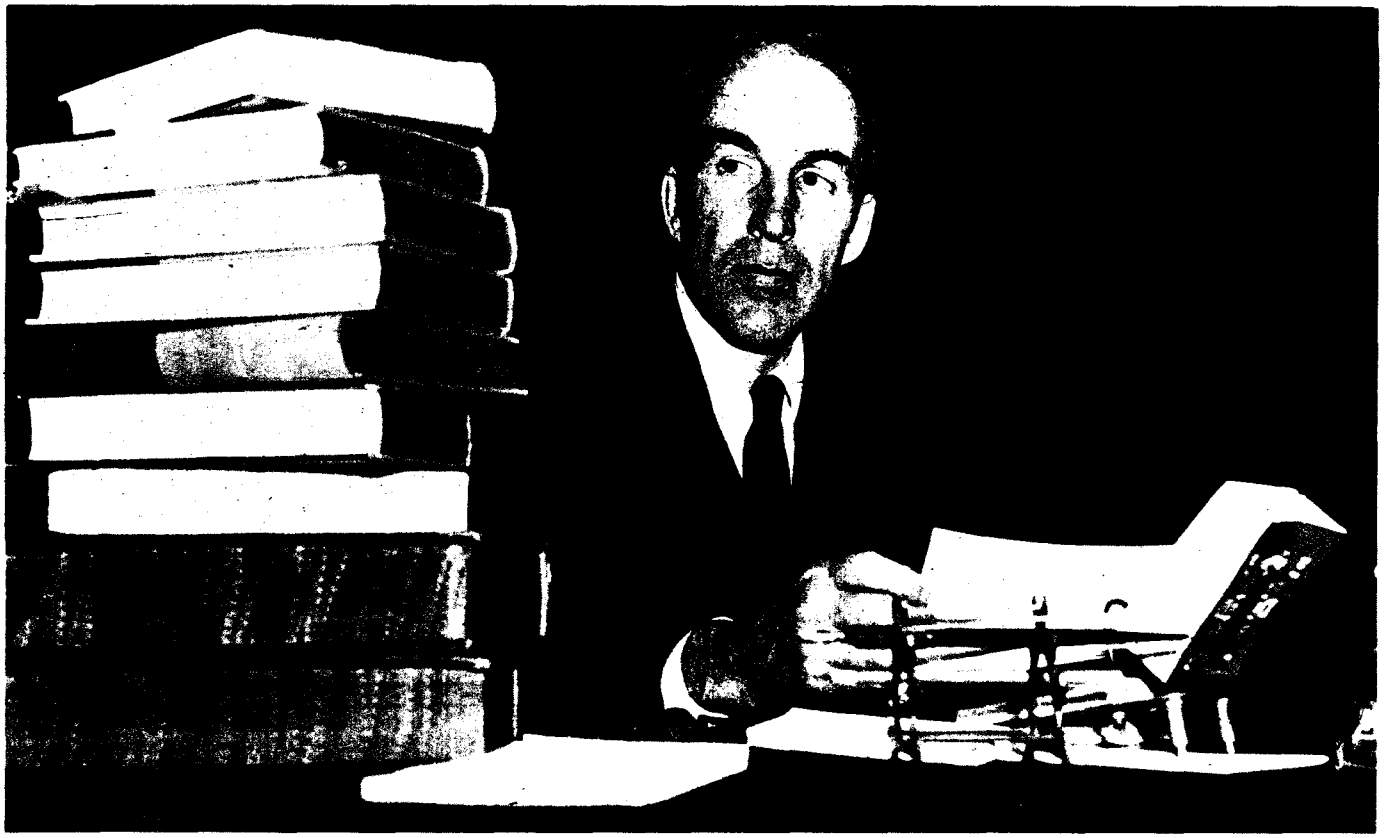
With "John Brown's Body" in 1928, Stephen Vincent Benét celebrated America's Civil War past.

American history of Revolutionary days was put to successful best-seller purposes by Kenneth Roberts.

The THEME of AMERICA

The depression moved Archibald MacLeish to write poetry about America's latent potentialities.



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Carl Sandburg—poet of the people, balladier, tireless biographer of Lincoln.

TWO main factors brought about the change: the Great Depression and the rise of Fascism in Europe. Of a sudden the tone of American writing altered. The brash young men who poked fun at their incredible country, or else deserted it entirely for Europe's more refined and receptive shores, had fallen abruptly from favor. In their place arose a new school whose purpose was to explore, and often extol, a rediscovered America.

John Dos Passos well explained the great awakening of interest in American history. "In times of change and danger, when there is a quicksand of fear under men's reasoning, a sense of continuity with generations gone before can stretch like a lifeline across the scary present." The number of writers ready to build that lifeline was legion. Van Wyck Brooks recreated the relatively serene days of transcendental New England, Carl Van Doren reappraised—in full scholarly panoply—the life of Benjamin Franklin, while Douglas Freeman did the same for General Lee, Lloyd Lewis for General Sherman, Allan Nevins for Grover Cleveland, and Carl Sandburg for Abraham Lincoln.

On a less academic plane was the rash of historical novels which broke out. By far the most successful of these, Margaret Mitchell's long saga of the Civil War, "Gone with the Wind," received a Pulitzer Prize in 1937. Many of the historical novels were sentimental and meretricious, but their phenomenal sales proved beyond doubt that the American people were engrossed as never before in their own past.

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HOW TO SELL A BOOK

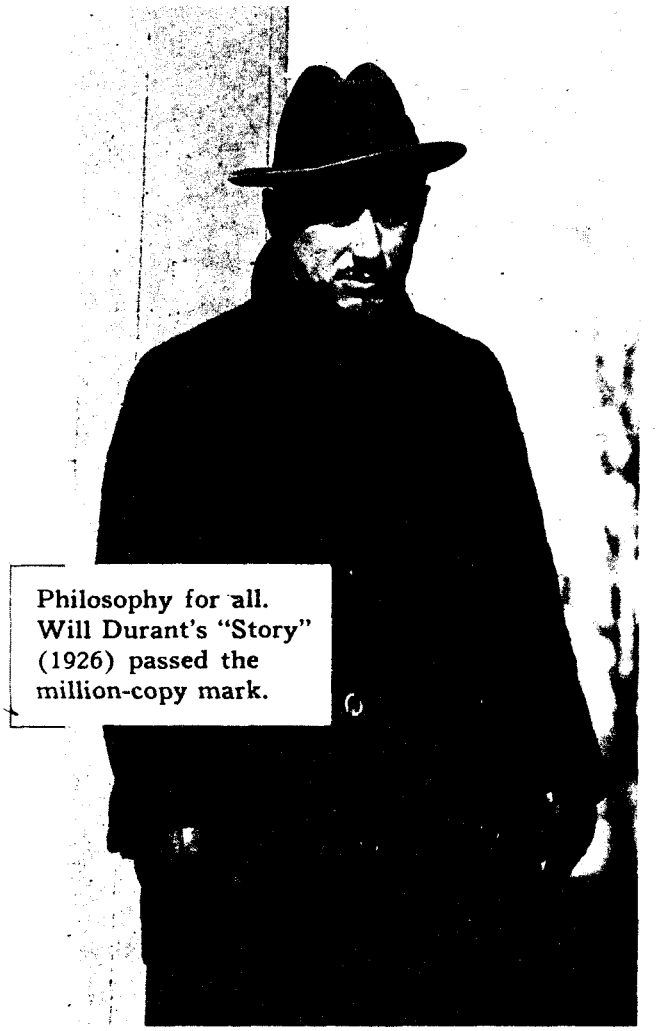
Joan Lowell's "authentic" story of adventures on a schooner later proved to be mainly fictitious. 1929 critics had called her book "a glamorous document."

Book publishing, once a leisurely and amiable profession, assumed the aspect of a major industry. Book clubs had no small part in effecting this change. In 1926 the Book-of-the-Month Club was founded, in 1927 the Literary Guild. Each had a jury of literary eminents to select the monthly morsel from lengthy publishers' lists. Though this method of book merchandising got off to a fairly slow start, its popularity snowballed, and it became in time the most important single factor in the book business.

Another element in boosting book sales was the magic power of "promotion." Astute advertising convinced thousands upon thousands of Americans that their lives would be incomplete without a certain requisite volume. Tie-ups between books and radio, books and movies, books and newspapers helped push sales into the millions.

An added fillip appeared with the success of pocket-size books. These cheap reprints were distributed on a magnificent scale—so much so that within a few years drug stores, railroad depots, and candy counters became accepted and substantial vendors of literary merchandise.

Another character whose reminiscences were larded with fable, Alfred Aloysius Smith, better known as "Trader Horn." His royalties reached $4,000 weekly.



Philosophy for all. Will Durant's "Story" (1926) passed the million-copy mark.

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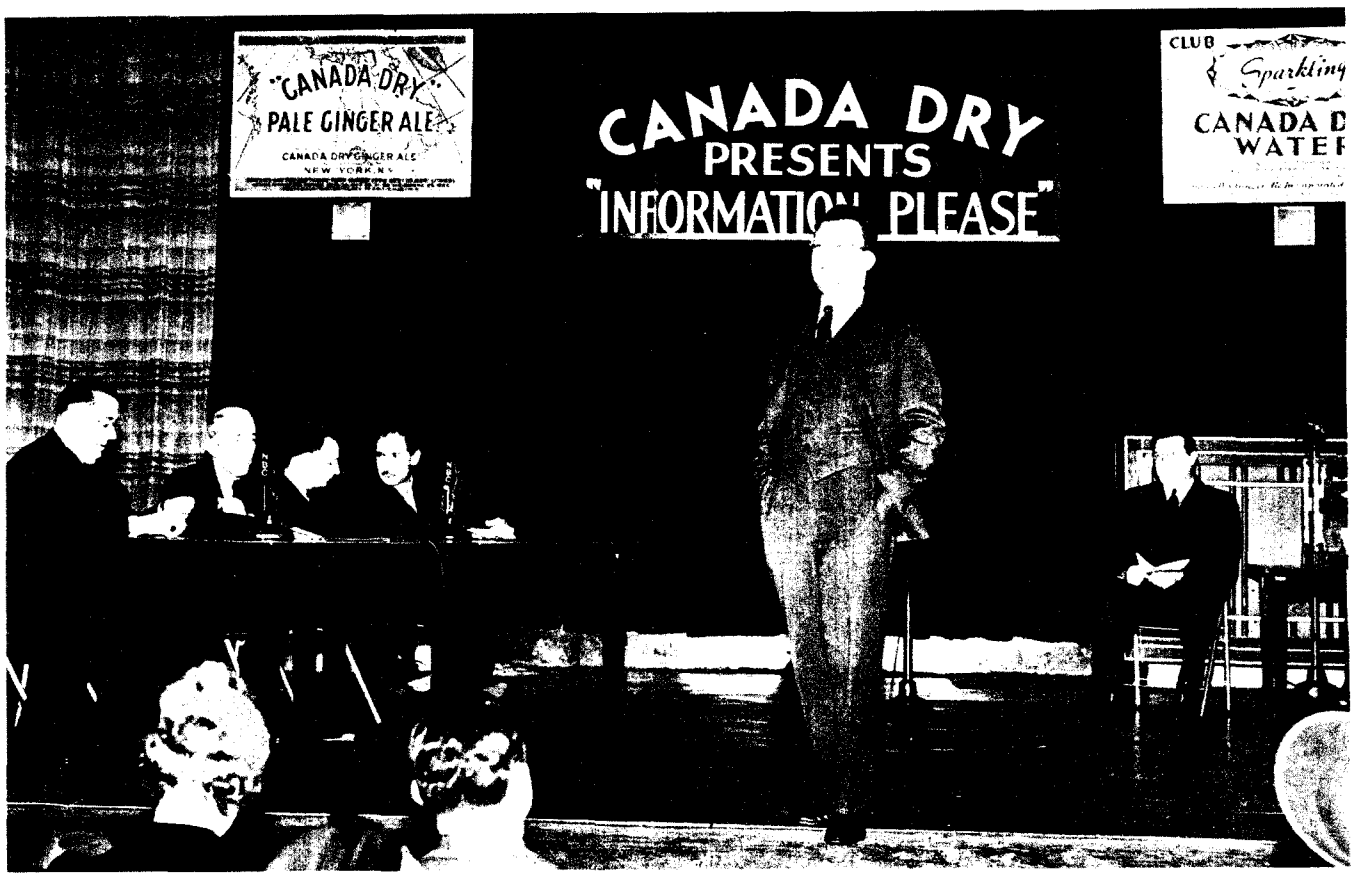
By 1949, book racks were cropping up in most unorthodox places. Supermarkets stocked books as well as groceries. Cigar stores had them too. Tie-ups with movies attracted those who seldom bought books.



Intellectual caviar for the millions. "Information Please" originated as a small sustaining program, but sponsors soon found that this supposedly high-brow program paid off. The performing experts also found it lucrative. Radio publicity appreciably increased the sale of their books from coast to coast.

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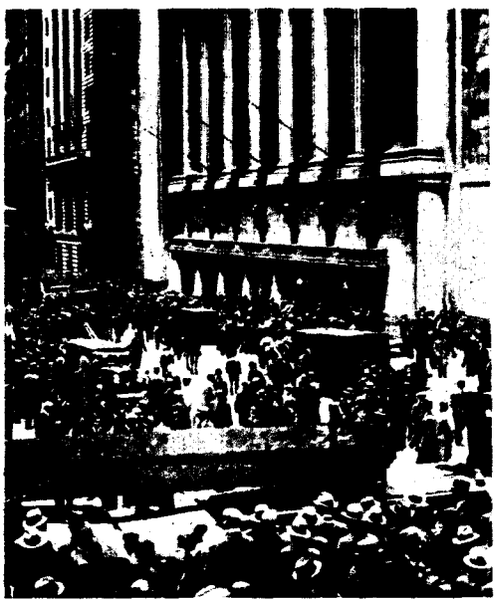
THUNDER on the LEFT

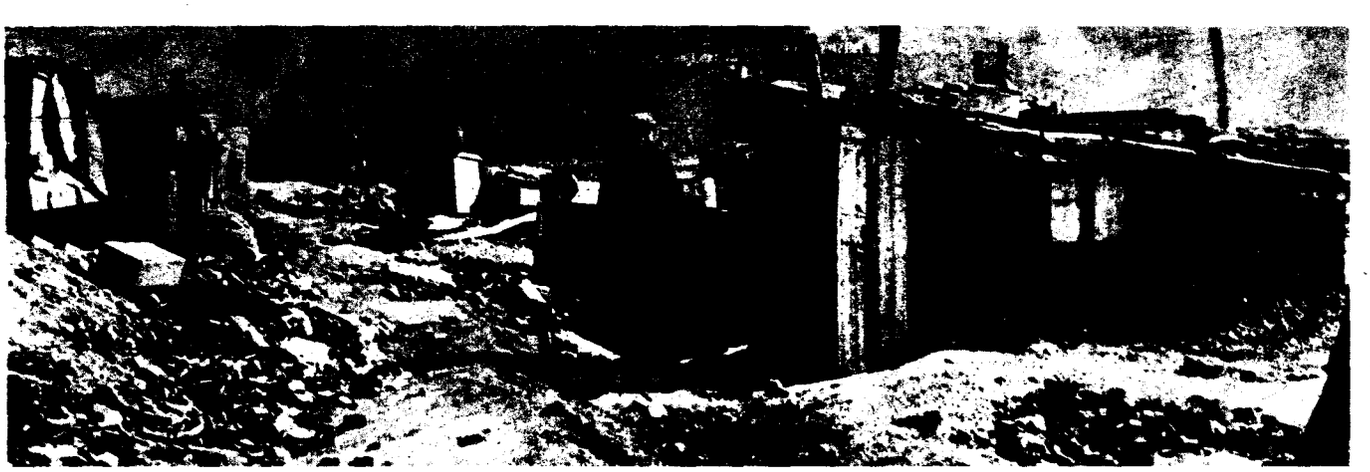


Crowds in Wall Street during the 1929 panic. The long depression had begun.

SING Me a Song of Social Significance." So went the hit tune of "Pins and Needles," a musical revue produced by a New York labor union. It might well have been amended to "write me a novel (or play, or poem) of social significance." This was the era of leftist literature, when the New Deal set about reforming our social and economic order and when the radical's solidarity with international communism had yet to be shattered by purge trials and non-aggression pacts with Hitler.

Authors were seized with a mission. Theirs was not to entertain nor to produce masterpieces of craftsmanship and artistry, but rather to awaken the people and lead the fight against injustice. Such efforts fell on fertile soil, for the American public, stunned and bewildered by a seemingly impenetrable economic impasse, were in a receptive mood for the clarion call to action. "Tobacco Road," which detailed the plight of a destitute Southern tenant family, played on Broadway for 3,182 performances; and John Steinbeck's story of migrant "Okies" in California, "Grapes of Wrath," was a best-selling novel.

Breadlines stretched across a nation. 25,000,000 people were on relief in 1934.



They called them "Hoovervilles." Evicted families lived in tin-and-cardboard shacks.

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Clifford Odets achieved fame with "Waiting for Lefty," 1935.

James T. Farrell wrote of the squalid South Side in Chicago.

John Steinbeck's characters were farmers struggling for survival.

"Grapes of Wrath" (1939) was compared, as a piece of crusading fiction, to "Uncle Tom's Cabin." The scene is from the movie (screen text by Nunnally Johnson), one of Hollywood's best efforts.

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In Charlie Chaplin's "The Gold Rush" (1925) Hollywood achieved a masterpiece of subtle pantomime.

Hollywood adds the ingredient of sound. With Al Jolson's "The Jazz Singer" of 1927 talkies were born.

HOLLYWOOD and BROADWAY

ACCORDING to many connoisseurs of the film, Hollywood enjoyed its Golden Age during the first few years of *SRL*'s life. From 1924 to the decade's close, silent films were at their zenith. It was the heyday of Charlie Chaplin and Harold Lloyd, of Lon Chaney and Douglas Fairbanks, of Greta Garbo and Lillian Gish. The invention of talking pictures in 1927 upset the apple cart. Before long Hollywood had mastered the technique of this new medium, but too rarely took complete advantage of its potentialities.

The talkies proved a windfall to many writers. It enabled them to earn big money; never before had mere scriveners received weekly salaries in the four-figure bracket.

Vaudeville died during the quarter-century and radio blossomed. Broadway experienced the least change. It had bad years and good years. But at its best the theatre was as exciting a place as ever.

Adolphe Menjou in "The Front Page." By 1931 the technique was down pat.

The modern movie. Virginia Mayo in "The Best Years of Our Lives." Too many postwar films were overly glossy and superficial.

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Eugene O'Neill's "Strange Interlude" (1928) used stream-of-consciousness technique. Glenn Anders, Tom Powers, and Lynn Fontanne in a tense moment.

The Sacco-Vanzetti case inspired Maxwell Anderson to write his play "Winterset" (1935). Margo and Burgess Meredith in the stage production.

"Life with Father" ran on Broadway from November 8, 1939 to August 31, 1946. Shown here are Dorothy Stickney and Howard Lindsay.

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THE THEME of WAR

WORLD WAR II was more minutely reported than any previous conflict. For four years motion pictures, radio, and the written word were riveted on this subject. Established authors such as Hemingway and Dos Passos donned battle dress to visit active areas of conflict. Other writers not yet established were soaking up impressions and experiences for the great novel they hoped to write when the war was over. If by 1949 the most impressive writing was still in the reportorial sphere, that was to be expected. It was yet too soon for anything but the beginnings of creative synthesis.

Ernest Hemingway (right) with fellow war correspondents. He had also been a reporter in Spain.

Readers wondered in 1949 if World War II would produce a sequel to "For Whom the Bell Tolls."

Bill Mauldin became famous for his realistic, often bitter, drawings of men at war.

Ernie Pyle wrote about the lowly GI abroad. Pyle was killed in the attack on Iwo Jima.

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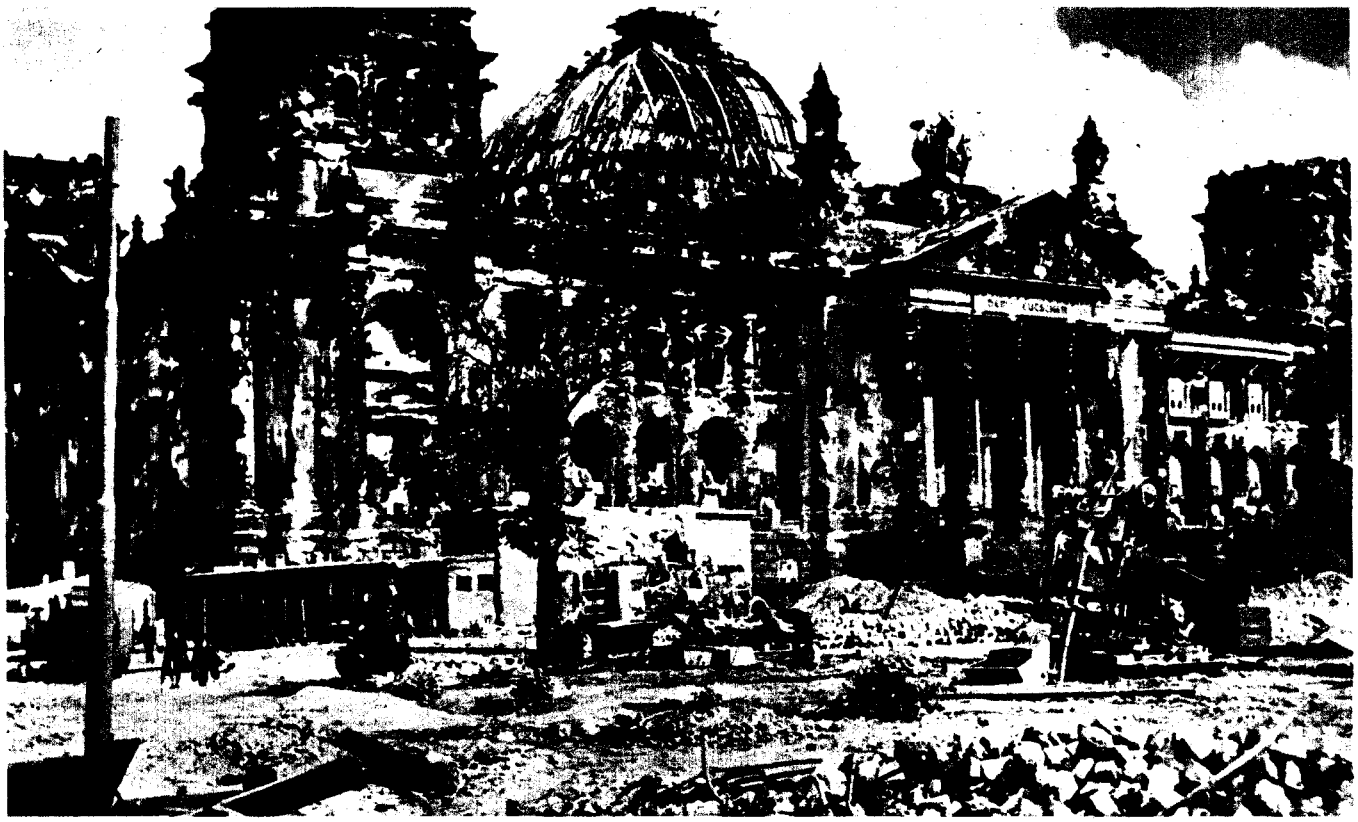

Berlin, 1945. The German capital was a shambles when peace came. By burning the Reichstag early in 1933 Adolf Hitler climbed to power. He ended in a conflagration of considerably vaster proportions.

New York, 1945. At war's end Americans could celebrate in unbombed cities. World War II brought prosperity to those who stayed at home. If another war broke out, the story might well be different.

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—Drawing by Noel Sickles.

Three months after Hiroshima, LIFE visualized an atom attack on New York City. Would scientists soon be testing for atomic radiation amid the ruins of New York's Public Library? In SRL's twenty-fifth year, George Orwell's brilliant and sardonic novel "Nineteen Eighty-Four" gave awful warning.

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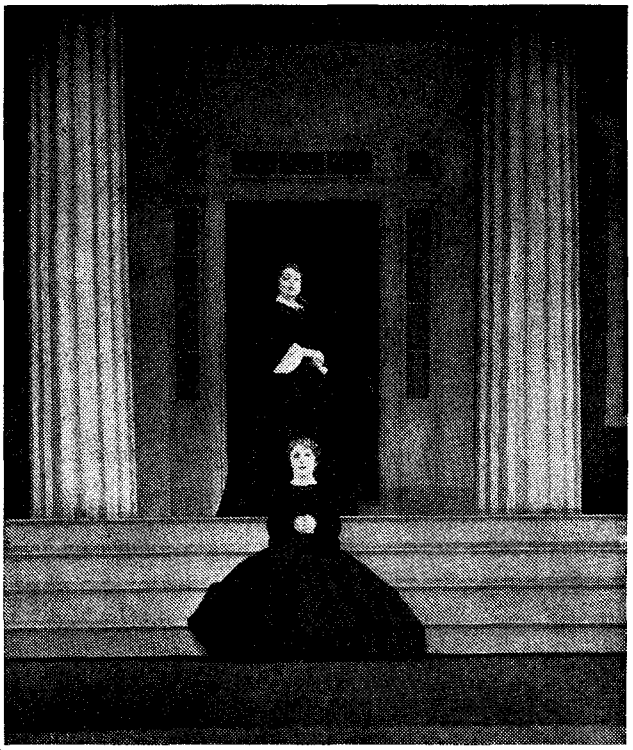

—*Vandamm Studio.*

The "Mourning Becomes Electra" set—Eugene O'Neill's "best plays were Greek-Revival in their spiritual architecture."

J. M. Brown

IT WAS the year of the Depression, though that had nothing to do with the depression which engulfed Joseph Wood Krutch when he was writing "The Modern Temper." Mr. Krutch, one of the most penetrating and far-ranging of our critics—indeed, one of the few genuine critics we have in the big, proud sense of the word — is more cheerful now. His current book, "The Twelve Seasons," proves this on its every thoughtful page. It is a delectable account of country living, so all-embracing in its philosophy that even city slickers feel a part of Nature. But Mr. Krutch's mood was different when, at the close of the Twenties, he contemplated Man, Love, Life, and Death. He was woeful then; woeful to such an extent that there were those who, in spite of their admiration, were forced to wonder if the apter title for his volume might not have been "The Modern Distemper."

On no subject was Mr. Krutch more despairing than on the tragic fate which, as he saw it, had overtaken contemporary tragic writing *because* it had overtaken modern man. Mr. Krutch held tragedy, real tragedy, to be among the many good things which had vanished from the earth. He felt it to be an expression of the great ages, the Greek and the Elizabethan. For this very reason he would grant it no connection with our own. He saw the world in which he found himself a shrunken place. It had lost touch with the heroic. Its vision of life was not of that ample and passionate kind which had animated Shakespeare or Sophocles. According to Mr. Krutch, God and Man and Nature had somehow dwindled during the centuries since they had had their say. Mr. Krutch took as the measure of our littleness not the realistic creed of modern art which had led our writers to seek out mean people, but the meanness of the vision of life which had made such a credo acceptable. "A tragic dramatist," he observed, "does not have to believe in God, but he must believe in Man." One gathered that Mr. Krutch, like the modern dramatists he lamented, had misplaced his faith in both.

Mr. Krutch's lament, as I say, was uttered in 1929. Although it made its melancholy points brilliantly, it was guilty of a strange omission. Eugene O'Neill was not even mentioned. Had an historian of the New Deal or the war years written of them without referring to Roosevelt, the omission could not have been stranger. For O'Neill was already full-stream in his career as a tragic dramatist. Ten years had passed since the writing of "Beyond the Horizon"; eight since "The Emperor Jones," "Diff'rent," and "The Straw"; seven since "Anna Christie" and "The Hairy Ape"; five since "Desire Under the Elms"; four since "The Great God Brown"; two since "Strange Interlude," and one since "Dynamo."

No matter what our opinion may have been of this or that of O'Neill's dramas; no matter how small the biggest of them may have proved compared to the masterpieces of Shakespeare and the Greeks; no matter how tarnished most of them have become by 1949, it was excitingly clear twenty-five years ago when "Desire Under the Elms" was produced that in America, of all surprised and surprising places, a dramatist had emerged who was tormented and inspired by the truest sensing of the tragic which the modern world has known.

FEW dramatists of his importance have written more unevenly than O'Neill. Few capable of rising as near to the heights as he has soared have sunk into the mire of more pretentious or deplorable mediocrity. Yet even the poorest of his dramas have been enriched by the courage of the man and by that fierce willingness to grapple with the imponderables which has made his best works memorable. What has enlarged the most unsatisfactory of his scripts, and made his career at once heartening and unique, has been the largeness of his concerns. No one, may I quickly add, has attested to this fact with greater warmth or discernment than did Mr. Krutch himself when, in a more cheerful mood, a short four years after his requiem for tragedy, he wrote a preface to a collection of O'Neill's plays welcoming their author to the select company of tragic dramatists.

Like Yank in "The Hairy Ape," O'Neill's central characters have wanted to "belong." They have been visible

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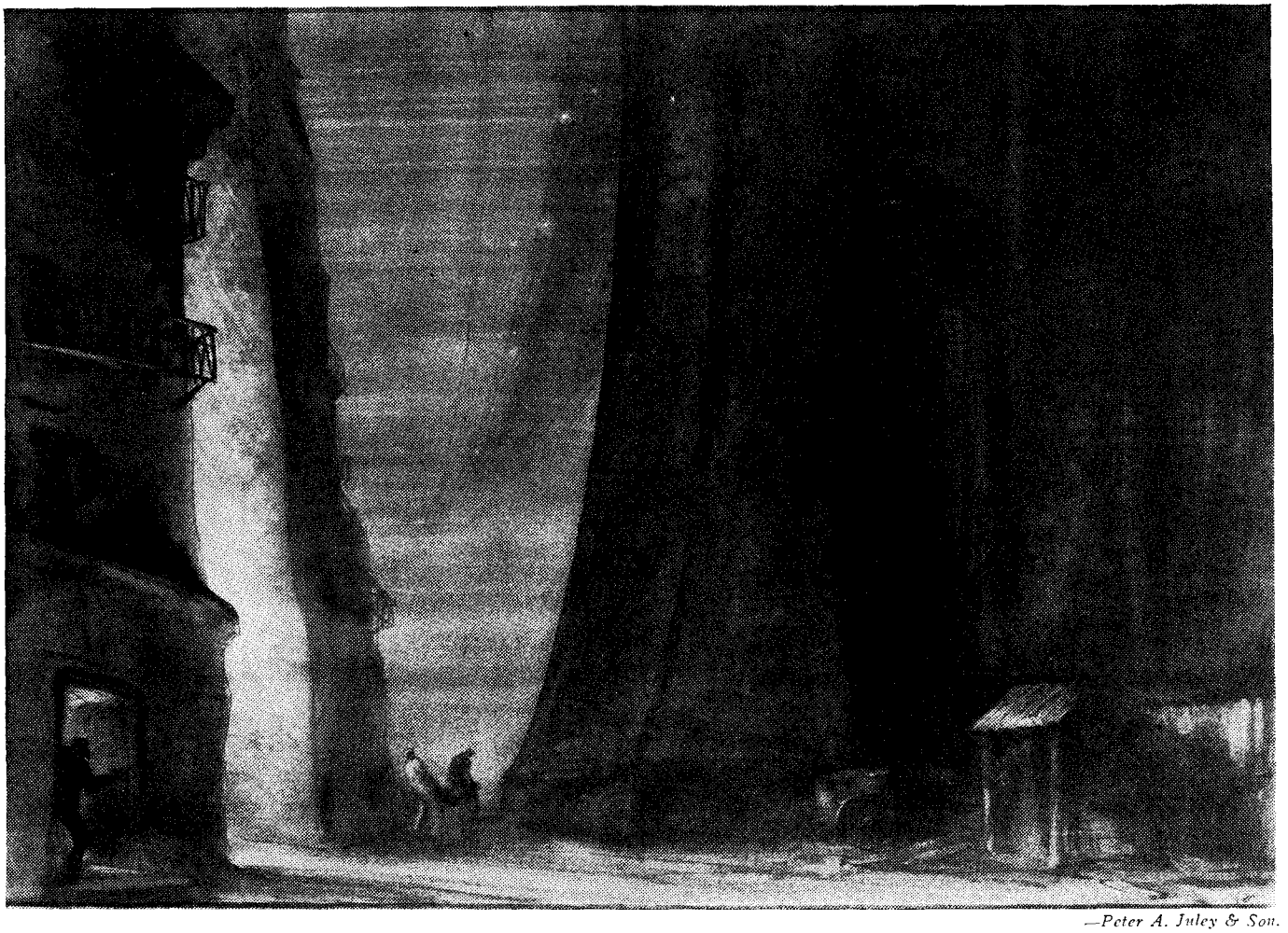
cogs in the invisible machinery of the universe. Whatever the crimes into which their passions may have led them, they have cared passionately about the forces controlling their being and their undoing. Not only that, these forces have not been indifferent to them.

This high concern in play after play, regardless of its individual merits, has given to the body of O'Neill's work a significance at once solitary and touched with grandeur. Most dramatists in America and elsewhere during this past quarter of a century have at their moments of greatest seriousness gone no further than to oppose their characters to their neighbors or the social systems under which they have lived. Not so Mr. O'Neill. The barricades his people have assailed have been of a kind unfound in city streets. The altitude of his reach has been the measure of his magnitude and more outstanding than any of his plays. It has set him apart, granted him a deserved preeminence, left him lonely but a rallying point. For the forces at war with his people or controlling their fates he has in his evolution found various names—"the great angry eye of God," "the ironic life force," "Mother Dynamo," or "Christ the Crucified." At his best, however, he has handled these elemental conflicts, unfrightened by their savagery and equal to their passion.

To achieve the tragic view, O'Neill was compelled to outgrow the surrenders to irony, crude melodrama, bathos, and pain for pain's sake which cursed his fledgling efforts. Before he could write with the high intensity attained in "Desire Under the Elms," and even more especially in the first two parts of "Mourning Becomes Electra," he also had to realize that outward naturalism—in other words, those details devoted to documenting the physical life of the body—has little to do with, and could only serve as impediments to, the interior and spiritual stuffs out of which true tragedy is wrought.

AS early as 1922, two years before he wrote "Desire Under the Elms," O'Neill made for a Philadelphia paper an immensely revealing statement of his awareness of high tragedy as the Greeks and Elizabethans had written it and of his attitude toward life and his own works. "Sure I'll write about happiness," said he, "if I can happen to meet up with that luxury, and find it sufficiently dramatic and in harmony with any deep rhythm in life. But happiness is a word. What does it mean? Exaltation; an intensified feeling of the significant worth of man's being and becoming? Well, if it means that—and not a mere smirking contentment with one's lot—I know there is more of it in one real tragedy than in all the happy-ending plays ever written. It's mere present-day judgment to think of tragedy as unhappy! The Greeks and the Elizabethans knew better. They felt the tremendous lift to it. It roused them spiritually to a deeper understanding of life. . . . They saw their lives ennobled by it. A work of art is always happy; all else is unhappy. . . . I don't love life because it's pretty. Prettiness is only clothes-deep. I am a truer lover than that. I love it naked. There is beauty to me even in its ugliness."

I have a reason for quoting this mention of the Greeks and the Elizabethans, and the ennobling lift, the exaltation, the odd but incontestable happiness created by true tragedy. My reason? Because this statement appeared nine years before O'Neill, at the apex of his powers, was to write "Mourning Becomes Electra." In it he chose not only to retell a Greek story in terms of Civil War New England but to house his Mannons in a great, chaste, Greek-Revival home, columned as if it were a temple. In spite of his



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Mielziner's great stage design for "Winterset"—"The religion which is tragedy finds Maxwell Anderson among the faithful."

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barroom, farmhouse, waterfront, or tenement backgrounds; in spite of his prostitutes, his stokers, outcasts, misfits, alcoholics, or sanitarium inmates, and the pungent Americanism of his dialogue, O'Neill did not have to wait for that setting in "Mourning Becomes Electra" to demonstrate that his best plays were Greek-Revival in their spiritual architecture. The worthiest of them, and even some of the less successful such as "The Straw," followed what in the great periods of the past has been the tragic blueprint.

Religions may change. God may pass under as many names as O'Neill has selected to identify the agents controlling his characters. Yet tragedy in the classic sense has always been, and remains, a kind of religion in its own right. It has sought to impose a pattern upon the patternless; to create an independent logic by relating cause and effect where actual living is most frequently illogical; and to wring ecstasy from misdeeds and tribulations.

Assuredly, tragedy is one of the strangest as well as the noblest of man's gropings for expression. Its subject is anguish, and anguish is the source of the pleasure it gives. No one can explain precisely what Aristotle meant by "through pity and fear effecting the proper purgation of these emotions." But everyone in the presence of an exalted tragedy has an intuitive comprehension of that elusive definition. For true tragedy, regardless of its subject matter, includes those who are adult enough to realize that all men, however happy, are doomed to die and that even a tranquil life, if survived long enough, is bound to be a shorn one.

Even so, tragedy is not concerned with the span of the years. In the vigorous or the old, it is concerned only with the intensity of the testing

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moments. It holds dying cheap and the death of its heroes and heroines a release for those who have achieved a certain tranquillity, a certain sublime and transfiguring peace, not merely from but because of the agonies they have endured. None of us would be cruel enough to stay their deaths or to deny them their final ecstasies and self-realization. We know that Death, when he at last appears to collect them, will have to be worthy of his conquests. In tragedy the body is almost an irrelevance; the spirit everything. This is why the wounds of the dying spill no blood. This is why, in the concluding acts of all the great tragedies (as once I tried to point out) no expiring character at the supremest moment of pain, whether he has stabbed himself or been stabbed, taken poison, fallen like a Roman on his sword, or been the victim of snakebite (more classically known as aspbite), has ever surrendered to the mortal luxury of an "ouch."

O'Neill's own tragedy, and ours, has been that though he possesses the tragic vision he cannot claim the tragic tongue. "The spirit of inquiry meets the spirit of poetry and tragedy is born," W. Macneile Dixon pointed out in as fine a book as has been written on the subject of tragedy. O'Neill's spirit has always been inquiring and protesting, but neither his inquiry nor his protest has led him to poetry. Although he has been able to feel and plan the great scenes, he has been unable to write the speeches which would have made them great. His poetry has been less than prose, his prose no substitute for poetry. Effective as his lines can be in the theatre, they have little or nothing to say when taken out of context. They dramatize pain and exaltation without orchestrating either. The glorious and needed music of the Greeks and Shakespeare is lacking. The result is that, in spite of the attempts of his tragedies to soar, they fly with one clipped wing even when they are not earthbound. For O'Neill, like all of us, is a victim of an age of prose, and prose confronts the tragic writer with an almost insuperable obstacle.

Maxwell Anderson has been acutely aware of this. He, too, is mindful of the tragic blueprint, the example of the past, and the need for poetry. Indeed, poetry has found no more stalwart champion in the modern theatre, fed as he holds it to be on a "starvation diet of prose," than Anderson. He has despised its deliberate inarticulateness and those climaxes in which the only eloquence has been a gesture or a moment of meaningful silence. Again and again, and unfortunately as if by rote, he has tried to escape from the strait jacket of contemporary realism. If his practice has not lived up to his theorizing, at least he has been haunted by the quickening dream.

Too often for his own good and the theatre's, he has turned to the past in his verse plays, succumbing romantically to kings, queens, and costumes, especially Tudor. When he wrote "Winterset," however, fourteen years ago, he tried to establish a new convention by seeking to do what

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"the great masters themselves" never attempted. This was "to make tragic poetry out of the stuff of their own times."

It was in "Winterset" that he came nearest to achieving the hopes and aims so eloquently stated in his prefaces. His contributions as a dramatic poet may be indifferent, but no one can deny that in theory the religion which is tragedy finds him among the faithful. This explains why he is so fond of likening the theatre to a cathedral. To him as a thoughtful, sometimes despairing man, science is not enough. "It may answer a few necessary questions . . . but in the end science itself is obliged to say that the fact is created by the spirit, not the spirit by the fact." Anderson's faith, not a very positive or heroic one, is that man must have a faith. Perhaps his old rabbi in "Winterset" stated this belief for him most singingly when, just before the final curtain, he said:

On this star,
in this hard star-adventure, knowing not
what the fires mean to right and left, nor whether
a meaning was intended or presumed,
man can stand up, and look out blind, and say:
in all these turning lights I find no clue,
only a masterless night, and in my blood
no certain answer, yet is my mind my own,
yet is my heart a cry toward something dim
in distance, which is higher than I am
and makes me emperor of the endless dark
even in seeking!

If tragic times were alone required for the incubation of great tragedies, the years of the Depression, the war, and this unpacific peace would have yielded many of them. But, instead of aiding in the writing of tragedy in the older sense and on the older pattern, these tragic times have, if anything, added to the difficulties.

A period of realism and an age of prose are not the only hindrances. The lost or dwindling religious faith of many people; the encroachments of such a materialistic and earthbound theology as Marxism; an increasing uncertainty as to accepted or acceptable standards; our living with the threat of possible mass annihilation; great changes in the stresses and basic concepts of our economic and social life; the emergence of the "little man" as the new hero for hero worship; the shrinkage of the individual's importance under the pressures of superstates or ever-growing bureaucracies; indeed, not only the notion but the realization that the century belongs to the common rather than the exceptional man—all these are factors, widening or limiting, which have altered tragedy along with everything else. Because of them, one wonders if the tragic blueprint, cherished for so long as an ideal, has not, at least in part, become a glorious anachronism.

Not that tragedy is dead or will ever die. Or that Man has lost his touch with the heroic. No one who has watched men, women, and children rise to the terrible trials of these past years can maintain that Man has become mean. The bigness of the so-called "little man" in the face of such trials and of daily living is one of the most hopeful facts of recent history. It is simply that the heroic has become different in scale and kind, and for this very reason tragedy needs to be rediscovered for our own times and in our own terms.

We have come a long way since "gorgeous Tragedy in sceptred pall" came sweeping by. Thebes, Pelops's

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line, or the tale of Troy divine, and even the kings and courtiers of Shakespeare are not as close to all of us as they once were. But tragedy in the tenement rather than the palace, tragedy different as it may be in speech, action, and outlook, retains some of its old characteristics. It refuses to become merely a play with an unhappy ending. As Arthur Miller pointed out in some prefatory notes he prepared for "Death of a Salesman," "tragedy implies more optimism in its author than does comedy. . . . Its final result ought to be the reinforcement of the onlooker's brightest opinions of the human animal."

This is why, much as we admire and are engrossed by such a play as Tennessee Williams's "A Streetcar Named Desire," we deny it the name of tragedy. It is violent, powerful, and touching; written without mercy and without illusions. No study in disintegration to have come out of our theatre has been more skilful or unflinching. But its people, though fascinating, are too small-spirited to be tragic. They do not grow by suffering; they merely decline. There is no exaltation in them.

There is, however, exaltation in "Death of a Salesman." At first seeing it may be obscured by the bruising impact of this story of a "little man" who is sentenced to discover his smallness rather than a big man undone by his greatness. Yet the exaltation is there none the less, as the second or third seeing makes clear. It is not strong; it is not meant to be. The play, however, is far from being as negative as some have mistaken it to be. A positive belief in Man underwrites its compassion and lies behind its sorrows.

Willy Loman may be stupid, weak, and confused. He may ruin his life by never discovering who he is and by dreaming the wrong dream. But he has dreamed a dream, a dream he is willing to die by. He has, too, a kind of battered dignity. Small as he is, he is large enough for all of us to discover something of ourselves in him and in his plight. Moreover, Mr. Miller is unafraid of emotion and can release it in language which, though written in the idioms of daily speech, is poetic in mood and feeling.

What Mr. Miller's future will be, no one can say. We can only hope. But it is encouraging to have him divorce the pathetic from the tragic, in those same prefatory notes I have already mentioned, and to have him state his belief that "the common man is as apt a subject for tragedy in its highest sense as kings were." Our need for tragedies, written from and of our times, is great today. For, surely, never before have we so needed to be reminded of the dignity and worth of man the individual.

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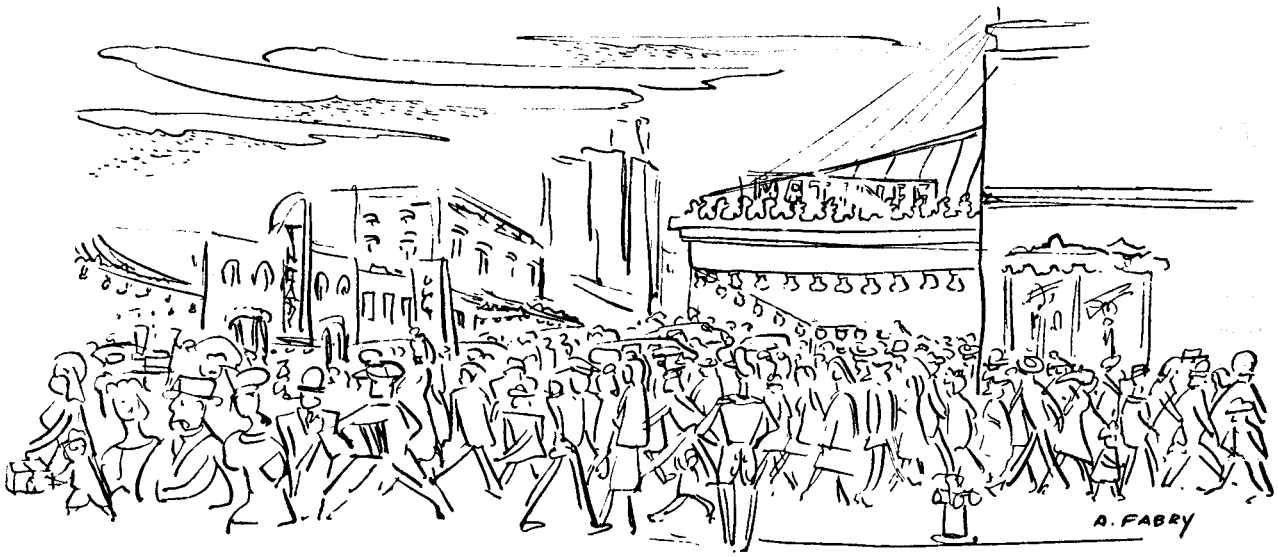

Footnote to A Preface

ROBERT E. SHERWOOD

Robert E. Sherwood

NOT only does John Mason Brown read the prefaces to published plays, but he manages to remember them, and this is not always convenient for those who wrote them (I am making no mention of GBS in this connection.) Recently Mr. Brown asked me to re-read a preface that I wrote in 1927 for a modest comedy, "The Queen's Husband." I complied with this request and did not have a particularly good time while doing so.

As I read this strange text, I couldn't make out what sort of person I was when I wrote it. I knew I was thirty-one years old at the time but my mental processes seemed much younger than that. Indeed, there were evidences of such juvenilism that I found myself inclining toward agreement with some heartless critic of that period who applied the term "knee-pants drama" to my first plays. (I mentioned this critic but not by name in the preface; I evidently was pretty sore at him.)

My principal lament then was that romance, sentiment, enchantment had gone out of the theatre. I attributed this disastrous development to the fact that all of American literature was coming under the dominance of journalism. I wrote: "We have developed a literature that is hemmed in on all sides by city desks—a literature that is not literature but 'copy' dedicated to a muse who wears a green eye-shade, wields a blue pencil, and asks, in a cold, contemptuous tone, 'Have you verified this?' "

My writing in this preface was not all negative. I came right out with some positive statements, including the following, which I endorse even now: "To be able to write a play, for performance in a theatre, a man must be sensitive, imaginative, naive, gullible, passionate; he must be something of an imbecile, something of a poet, something of a liar, something of a damn fool."

(I heard some of those words repeated several times during the Second World War when I enjoyed the honor of being mentioned on the enemy radio. There must have been somebody in the Japanese propaganda ministry who possessed a copy of "The Queen's Husband"—perhaps he was a former pupil of John Mason Brown's—because I was referred to as "this American propagandist, author of a play called 'Idiot's Delight,' who once admitted that he is something of an imbecile, something of a liar, something of a damn fool." Evidently this went over so well that the Goebbels office in Berlin picked it up and used it.)

I do not want to seem too scornful of myself as I was in the 1920's; I have not aged or improved enough for that. Indeed, I can express some sympathy for myself. That was a dreadful decade for anyone idealistically or romantically or even hopefully inclined. Disillusionment was fashionable. The decade had begun with the realization that millions of lives had been sacrificed and that the world had certainly *not* been made safe for democracy. It also began with the profoundly shocking (to me) revelation that six members of the Chicago White Sox, including the great Shoeless Joe Jackson, had sold out to gamblers and thrown a World Series; it seemed that the last illusion had perished for us Americans when Jackson, emerging from the Court House, could only hang his head in reply to the little Chicago boy who pled, "Say it ain't true, Joe."

THEN there was the Eighteenth Amendment, producing that temple of cynicism, the speakeasy. There was the rise of gangsterism. There was the assurance of quick millions on the stock market. There was the instalment plan; as Elmer Davis put it—and I can quote him only approximately—a woman knowing she could get a mink coat for a small down payment followed by twenty "easy" payments through the years, was apt to believe she could get her sense of moral values on the same terms.

The time was propitious for the emergence of Sinclair Lewis with "Main Street" and "Babbitt" and for all the books and plays that "debunked" previously hallowed figures or sacred traditions. It was a decade when a mighty publishing house, after a nationwide investigation, came up with the conclusion that the two things uppermost in the American mind were confidence in Calvin Coolidge and hunger for pornography (hardly a surprising combination).

When I wrote my first plays—"The Road to Rome," "The Queen's Husband," "Waterloo Bridge," and some other knee-pants dramas that nobody ever saw—I was seeking escape from

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Top row: New playwrights of the Twenties—Edna Ferber, Clifford Odets, Lillian Hellman. Second row: Rising young stars—Katharine Cornell, Leslie Howard, Eva LeGallienne. Third row: Three trail-blazing directors—Arthur Hopkins, Jed Harris, Guthrie McClintic. Bottom row: Young designers—Robert Edmond Jones, Jo Mielziner, Norman Bel Geddes.

one of the most sordid of periods, and it is of incidental interest to me that, as a writer, I unwittingly discarded the escape mechanism in 1933, when Franklin Roosevelt and Adolf Hitler came to power.

So there was some justification for my gloom at the prospect of things in general in the days when I and *The Saturday Review of Literature* were young, but my remarks about the dismal state of the theatre of that time were just plain silly. Looking back into the 1920's it seems to me that the American theatre was then a wonderfully exciting place in which to work and to progress. Far from being hemmed in by copy desks or censored by a muse with a green eye-shade, it was as wide open as a virgin continent, and as teeming with chances for adventure and fortune.

NEW talents and new ideas appeared and flourished in all the theatre arts. It was at the beginning of 1920 that Eugene O'Neill came to prominence, and here are some of the other playwrights who followed: Maxwell Anderson, Sidney Howard, Philip Barry, Edna Ferber, George S. Kaufman, Marc Connelly, George Kelly, S. N. Behrman, John Howard Lawson, John van Druten, Anita Loos, George Abbott, Philip Dunning, Kenyon Nicholson, Hatcher Hughes, John Colton, Paul Green, Vincent Lawrence, Ben Hecht, Charles MacArthur. Elmer Rice had had previous success but his real, revolutionary talent developed during the 1920's with such plays as "The Adding Machine." In the next few years came Moss Hart, Preston Sturges, John Wexley, Lynn Riggs, Rose Franken, Sidney Kingsley, Lillian Hellman, Russel Crouse, Samson Raphaelson, Clifford Odets.

The rising stars of the same period included: Alfred Lunt, Lynn Fontanne, Katharine Cornell, Helen Hayes, Ruth Gordon, Walter Huston, Gertrude Lawrence, Judith Anderson, Eva Le Gallienne, Tallulah Bankhead, Paul Muni, Barbara Stanwyck, Fredric March, Florence Eldridge, Philip Merivale, Roland Young, Louis Wolheim, James Gleason, Hope Williams, Jeanne Eagels, Glenn Hunter, Margalo Gillmore, Winifred Lenihan, Elliott Nugent, June Walker, Joseph Schildkraut, Leslie Howard, Dennis King, Helen Menken, Miriam Hopkins, Osgood Perkins, Lee Tracy.

Here are some other assorted names that came to fame in the Daddy Browning decade: George and Ira Gershwin, the Astaires, Bobby Clark, Oscar Hammerstein II, Joe Cook, Vincent Youmans, Beatrice Lillie, Richard Rodgers, Lorenz Hart, Paul Robeson, Michael Arlen, Cole Porter, Jimmy Durante, Noel Coward, Brown & Henderson, and the Marx Brothers.

Just how much the new writing and acting talent compelled entirely new concepts of theatrical production, or just how much the new producers gave the talent unprecedented opportunities for asserting itself, need not be debated here. But when the Theatre Guild moved uptown after the First World War and established itself as a solid, commercial success instead of a little band of starry-eyed but undernourished torchbearers, all of theatrical management and direction achieved a radically different character. The ancient and frequently vulnerable theory that a play that was "arty" could never get by in the box office was forever discarded, and among the plays largely responsible for this were "John Ferguson," "Beyond the Horizon," "Liliom," "Anna Christie," "Saint Joan," "The Show-Off," "Beggar on Horseback," "What Price Glory?," "They Knew What They Wanted."

The principal trail-blazing directors were Arthur Hopkins, Winthrop Ames, Robert Milton, Philip Moeller, George Cram Cook, Rouben Mamoulian, Guthrie McClintic, Jed Harris, Howard Lindsay, Chester Erskine. Among the scene designers: Robert Edmond Jones, Norman Bel Geddes, Jo Mielziner, Lee Simonson, Albert Johnson,

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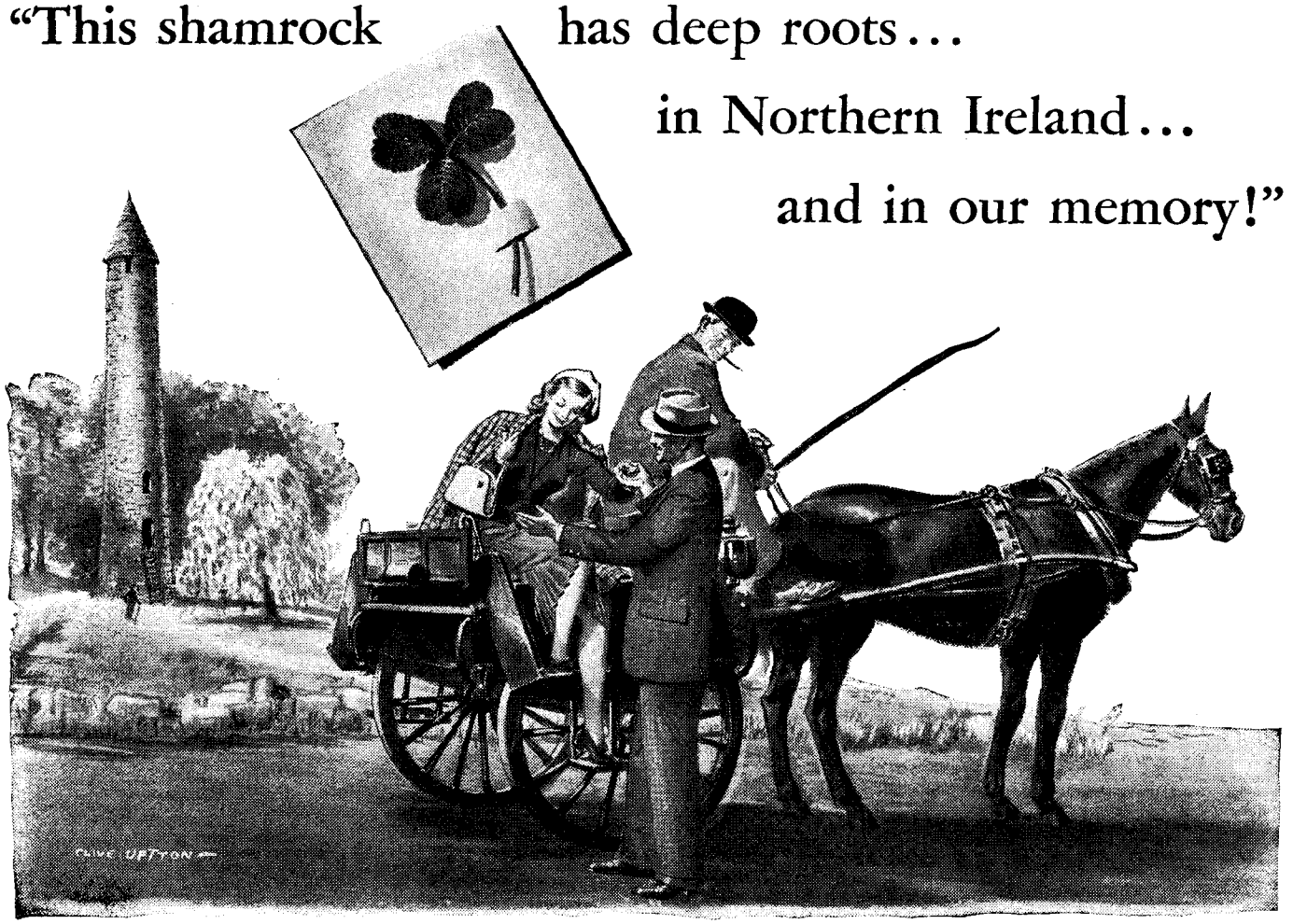
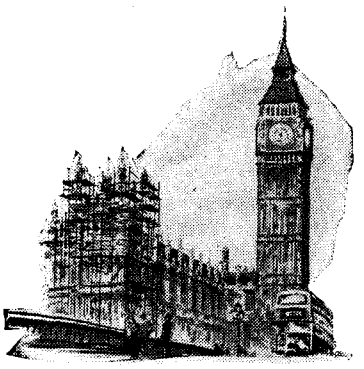


"I can picture the spot where we plucked it—where its plant, no doubt, is still growing—as if we'd left there only yesterday.

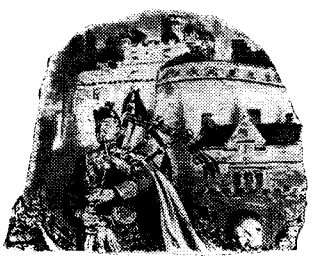
"It's curious how such a small keepsake, itself now dry and withered, helps keep pleasant memories alive!

"Looking at this leaf of shamrock, I can almost hear the creak and jingle of the jaunting car that took us on our picnic to that ancient Round Tower in County Antrim. I even seem to sniff the fragrant Ulster air.

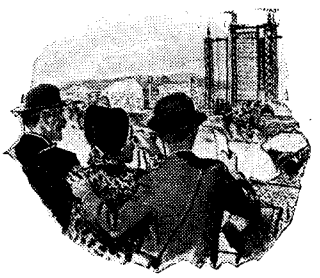
"And, from Northern Ireland, we're carried quickly back through the happy days we spent in other parts of Britain . . . retracing vacation footsteps . . . recalling the warmth of our welcome . . . re-living it all again . . ."



"Remember sidewalk-supervising the rebuilding of the Houses of Parliament? Remember Westminster Abbey's 'hush of history', as you called it—till suddenly Big Ben's booming voice broke in?"



"Remember the wonderful music at the Edinburgh Festival . . . and the Castle, floodlit at midnight . . . and the skirling of those massed pipe bands?"



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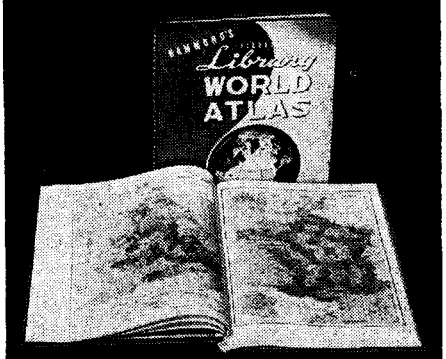

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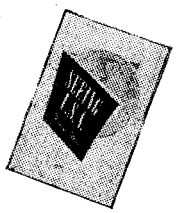

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(I am sure that all of these lists of names are inadequate, but I am writing this in a Philadelphia hotel where no reference books are at hand, and the official temperature is 99.2.)

THERE was enough brilliance and even genius in those lists to have produced a golden age and one is inclined to ask whatever happened to it? The principal answer to that is, I suppose, the talking pictures, which came into being in the later 1920's, thereby saving the movie industry from one of its recurrent appointments with catastrophe. It was not the competition the talkies gave the theatre for popular favor that mattered so much: it was the fearful devouring of talent by the insatiable studios. Young playwrights of exceptional promise—and now I am not mentioning names—were whisked to Hollywood and never heard from again. Young actors and actresses were signed up for life before they had finished that first week in Westport. Were lists to be drawn up of the important new talent which has appeared in the theatre in the past twenty years (and remained for any time in the theatre) they would appear diminutive by comparison with those of the 1920's. The theatre still gives extraordinary indications of health—"Anne of the Thousand Days," "Death of a Salesman," "Detective Story," and "The Madwoman of Chaillot" are recent ones—but they don't come nearly often enough for the theatre to lose its traditional status as a fabulous invalid.

On the other hand, the American theatre has never known greater vitality in the musical show field—nor greater variety and originality. It is customary to date the recent wave of vastly superior musicals from "Oklahoma!," which has become not only a landmark but a kind of national monument or natural wonder. I think the dating should go much farther back—to the early Richard Rodgers-Lorenz Hart shows, to the Jerome Kern-Oscar Hammerstein "Showboat" (also "Music in the Air"), to the Irving Berlin-Moss Hart revue "As Thousands Cheer," to the George Gershwin-George Kaufman-Morrie Ryskind "Of Thee I Sing," to the Arthur Schwartz-Howard Dietz little and big shows, to the Richard Rodgers-Lorenz Hart "Pal Joey" (after the delightful short story of the same name by John O'Hara). "Oklahoma!" emphasized the importance of choreography but so, before it, did 1938's "On Your Toes" (with the superb ballet "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue") and so also did the even earlier exquisite "I Married an Angel."

Whatever the genesis of the present superiority, a theatre which can produce in one season "Lend an Ear," "Kiss Me, Kate," "Where's Charley?," and "South Pacific," and all the talent embodied therein, is not ready for requiems.

In fact, the American theatre today is bristling with potential talent in all departments save one: playwriting. It is a melancholy fact that one needs few extra fingers to count the young or even sub-middle-aged playwrights who have so far made any valid claim to public recognition. There are Arthur Miller, Tennessee Williams, Garson Kanin, Ruth Gordon, Fay Kanin, Robert Ardrey, Mary Chase, Joshua Logan, Irwin Shaw, Arthur Laurents, John Hersey, and, of course, but not for several years, William Saroyan. And who else? Here again I may have made some glaring omissions which may arise to plague me—and this is one way in which I should be delighted to be plagued. But looking back over recent years it seems to me that the theatre has had to place far too much reliance on the works of the weary veterans listed earlier in this piece and has had far too few transfusions of new blood.

Nor is there much hope that I can see of any substantial playwriting reinforcements from overseas. The Soviet Union could be a gigantic source of revitalization but it obviously will not be as long as all art is subject to the censorship of the theoreticians. England, France, Italy—in these countries, as here, the best young talent seems to be going into the films, where it may flare up for a moment and then be permanently quenched.

I don't want to seem despairing now as I was twenty-two years ago in that preface. However, I cannot pretend that I feel particularly optimistic about the future of a theatre in which everything is likely to be excellent except the quality of the new plays.

OF course, the libraries are loaded with material ready for revival—Shaw had probably the greatest box-office success of his life with Maurice Evans's revival of "Man and Superman" in the past two years. Some sort of theatre will always exist on the strength of classics alone. But it will be a musty, fusty institution without the frequent airings which only new plays can give, and the supply of new playwrights has dwindled to an alarming extent. There was a time when virtually everyone was a playwright. As Arthur Hopkins pointed out, you could ask the postman, "How's your second act?" and he would tell you. But today the writing of plays appears to be approaching obsolescence. Able

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writers tend more and more to seek other forms of expression. (I can repeat the names of Irwin Shaw and John Hersey as examples.) I do not know why this is so. The potential rewards are still enormous. The excitement is as great as ever. Perhaps the trouble is that writers no longer can summon enthusiasm for a medium which depends upon make-believe—but here I am getting back to the preface to "The Queen's Husband" and that muse with a green eye-shade.

And, by the way, I should like to ask John Mason Brown please not to call me when the 50th Anniversary issue of the *SRL* is going to press and request me to reread *this* article. Anyway, I shall not be answering my telephone in 1974.

Democracy's Temple

THE ONLY faith I've ever had is in democracy, in the ability of the people of every country, when they're free, to somehow find a livable way through this world, and somehow find the leaders who will take them on that way. As I have said before, I believe the theatre is the temple of democracy, that here, as in no other art, the people themselves set standards for conduct, pick the kind of men and women they admire, pick the kind of thing they feel like jeering at, choose patterns of behavior, choose the ideals by which they mean to live.

Let me quote a passage I wrote some years ago—because I still hold the same convictions:

"In brief, I have found my religion in the theatre, where I least expected to find it, and where few will credit that it exists. But it is there, and any man who tries to write plays will find himself serving it, if only because he can succeed in no other way. . . .

"According to the worshippers of the good who sit in our theatres, a hero may have his doubts and indecisions, for that's only human, but when it comes to the test he must be willing to take steel in his bosom or take lead through his intestines or he resigns his position as a man. The audience, sitting in our theatres, makes these rules and, in setting them, defines the purposes and beliefs of homo sapiens. There is no comparable test that I know of for what is good in the human soul, what is most likely to lead to that distant and secret destination which the race has chosen for itself and will somehow find."

—MAXWELL ANDERSON.

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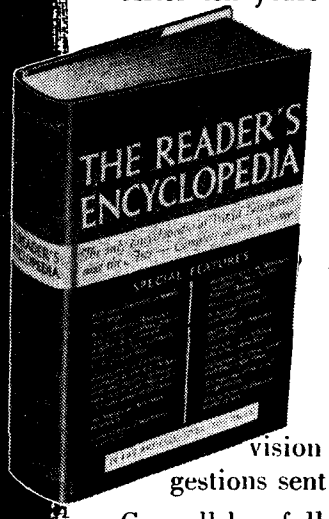

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Credo of A Critic

IN AN irreverent mood several years ago I described drama criticism as an "ignoble profession." I was using "ignoble" as the direct opposite to "noble," which it is, though it is not generally used quite that baldly. The remark was not rapturously received by everybody, despite the fact that no one in his right mind would refer to drama criticism as a "noble profession."

In the nature of things it cannot be. No profession that lives off the creative efforts of other people can be that. Criticism is parasitical: it has to have something constructive to cling to since it has neither the originality nor the energy to flourish by itself. The word "noble" may be considerably too fulsome to apply to poets, dramatists, and novelists indiscriminately. But in any useful code of values first things must come first. It is obvious that poets, dramatists, and novelists come before their critics. Nature arranged that: I didn't.

But all writers, whether creative or critical, have one thing in common: a passion for the health and well-being of contemporary life. Every writer worth the paper he scribbles on has some dream of an impossibly noble life. "Every good artist," Leonardo da Vinci said, "has two subjects—man and the hopes of his soul." That remark could be made even pithier, I think. Since the hopes of a man's soul are part of the man, the remark could be compressed into: "Every good artist has one subject—man." However the idea be expressed, I regard it as the statement of an absolute standard, and perhaps the only standard in which I sincerely believe. "Literature is big only in one way—when used as an aid to the growth of humanities," said Walt Whitman. I believe that, too. The philosophy is the same.

Since all serious writers have, consciously or unconsciously, the same goal, it follows that they need the same equipment and resources. In addition to energy ("the life force," Shaw calls it), they need a wide, deep, practical experience of life. They need to be wholly alive, aware of other people and full of ideas.

On principle I do not subscribe to the pusillanimous notion that some people know what is good in art and others do not. There are no final authorities—least of all those who come to regard themselves as such. For there are no absolute standards in art save the ultimate one that cannot be defined because, like God, it goes deeper than articulate human experience. But some opinions are more valid than others. I respect the opinions of interesting people who bring to the appreciation of art the same sanity, vigor, and independence that they apply to their personal lives. Some people are more alive than others and what they think is accordingly vital and illuminating.

As the years go by I have less and less respect for tradition, which I suspect is full of cant. From one generation to another we carry over a lot of piety about the good and the beautiful and it clutters up our spiritual world. Our mental furniture always needs a good rearranging, clearing out, and dusting. Traditional opinions are hardly worth the labor of writing. The only opinions that are valid come from people who are not parochial but touch life in many places, know many fields, have wide interests, and manage somehow to retain a freshness of impression. In fact, there should be a large dash of the amateur in criticism. For the amateur is a man of enthusiasm who has not settled down and is not habit-bound.

Although I do not rank criticism among the highest forms of literary work, I am far from regarding it as negligible. On the contrary, it has always interested me very much. I have always had a great voracity for opinions. They are the electricity of the mind. "What do you think?" Is there a more profoundly social question than that? It assumes that we are all living together and have within ourselves the power to sort things out and create a civilization. No community is wholly alive that is not interested in art, which is the mirror of human beings, and that does not have vigorous opinions about art and artists. If it feels deeply about these things, it also has enough energy to look after other public affairs. In short, it has a future.

It is the function of the critic to pitch into the intellectual life of the community and express his opinion with force and clarity. What he knows about the technique of his field is valuable, but not half so valuable as his interest in and knowledge of the life of human beings.

—BROOKS ATKINSON.

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Retrospect with Lament & Motto

IRIS BARRY

Iris Barry

IN THE thirtieth year of its existence, the motion picture in 1924-25 received congratulations on having outgrown its infancy, was acclaimed as a mighty force in education, and perceived to be a harbinger of better international understanding. None of these wishful compliments, however, was then being paid to it for the first nor, as succeeding years would prove, for the last time.

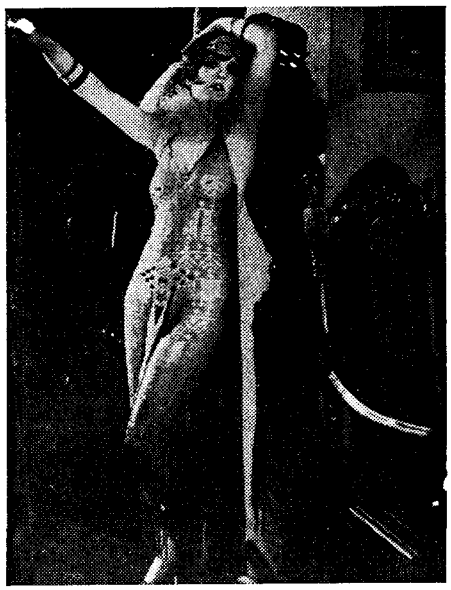
The production, rental, and exhibition of films had already grown into a tripartite industry of large volume and worldwide reach; by now mainly an American product it was, nevertheless, no more a true child of mass-manufacture than is book publishing, though sometimes mistakenly so regarded by its ingenious overlords. England, France, Italy, and even Denmark had formerly made notable contributions to the river of films gushing with ever greater profusion into primitive movie houses before World War I, but by 1919 three of those four countries had for all practical purposes ceased to be sources of supply. Unexpectedly, neutral Sweden and conquered Germany were about to put forth some distinguished if not very numerous and not widely popular screen offerings, whereas France—once the leader—showed alternate signs of new vigor and of relapse. While movie theatres had increased prodigiously in numbers, in size, and in amenity all over the world during the war years, American movies and American film stars had entrenched themselves, perhaps permanently, everywhere. Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks, then Charlie Chaplin, had all recently returned from visits to European capitals, wherein they had enjoyed such personal triumphs as emperors of antiquity would have envied.

Vera Reynolds, Mack Sennett belle—"rolled stockings . . . brief bathing suits."

From pole to pole and in all latitudes, millions of girls and women were sweetly swooning in torrid daydreams of Rudolph Valentino. Hollywood was fast becoming a new Mecca with El Dorado overtones for authors and actors, dwarfs, animal trainers, and for experts—often boldly self-appointed experts—on every subject imaginable from etiquette to old masters. So ubiquitous, so much to the public fancy were the movies now pouring out of Southern California, and presumably so powerful their influence on the masses everywhere, that anguished cries of monopoly were beginning to be raised abroad and notably in England, where legislation designed at once to revive native film production and to restrict the "total domination of British screens by American ideas" was already under active consideration and would shortly materialize into a restrictive "quota."

Indeed, some little anti-American feeling was being fanned by reiterated curses from the press upon the deplorable "stranglehold" which Hollywood had gained on British morals and manners, as well as by the franker and possibly more effective claim that "trade follows the films." American movies, it is repeated, not only drained off large sums of money from Great Britain each year in film rentals, by incidentally putting various American manufactures attractively before the eyes of a vast audience, they were in fact acting as advance salesmen and thereby greatly assisting the United States to capture foreign markets.

So many complaints had been hurled at Hollywood by this time against the allegedly pernicious influence of its output upon the morals and manners of Americans themselves, that the first of the charges presumably troubled



"What is lacking today [from] 1925? The 'It' girl Clara Bow," among other things.

the film-makers themselves very little. Besides, had the film industry not created a special public-relations organization, the famous Hays office, which was to deal with just such protests? The charge of unfair competition in world trade, however, may well have seemed an enigma. Sure, Hollywood movies were showing Ford automobiles and brief bathing suits, handset telephones, porcelain bathroom fixtures, and—of late—radios. But these objects had been displayed innocently enough. Was Hollywood to blame if people in Manchester or Cape Town consequently yearned for such things, just as people in Pittsburgh or San Francisco did? For that matter, any sensible person anywhere would *wish* to have a Ford if he could not aspire to a Rolls, and there is no law against *wishing*.

THUS in 1924-25 the general situation, like and unlike today's. The similarities are striking, even to the extent that the motion-picture industry at that moment was seemingly going through one of its periodical crises: business was said to be flagging, attendance at movie houses falling off, the Hollywood output was being castigated as meretricious and machine-made, lacking in fresh ideas, hag-ridden by the star system and by needless extravagance. As spokesman for the industry, Will H. Hays thereupon proceeded to soft-pedal this yammer about falling receipts, while spiritedly discerning an upswing and calling for more brotherly love between the various branches—production, distribution, and exhibition—of the business. The terms he employed much resembled certain of the statements made by his photogenic successor, Eric Johnston, in 1949.

Moreover, Great Britain, having in

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the intervening years succeeded beyond all expectations in attempts to revive her own film production, is once more holding out stoutly against "domination of British screens" by American movies; and so, if possibly less skilfully, are other countries. Yet America today still provides the bulk of film fare the world over and incidentally—exactly as in earlier years—thereby disseminates some most peculiar notions as to how ordinary or even extraordinary Americans live and behave. And once again American film companies are investing in European film production, as in the Twenties.

Is it now necessary to recall that twenty-five years ago a challenging alternative to movie-going was being offered by radio? In 1926-27 people were clustering every evening in hotel lobbies to listen to Amos and Andy on the air very much as, the film men acutely realize, people have taken to clustering madly around television sets at this very moment. For, at that time, sound had not yet come to the screen and was not really regarded as imminent, though Dr. Lee de Forest had previously launched some talking shorts, and Fox-Movietone had its first newsreels-with-sound ready for issue by late summer 1927. Yet it only remained for Warner Brothers to crash through with Al Jolson's part-talking "The Jazz Singer," his all-talking "The Singing Fool," and the thin little musico-melodrama "Lights of New York"; Metro's "Broadway Melody" and RKO's "Rio Rita" were hot in pursuit. In what seemed then like less than a wink, the so-called silent era of the cinema ended. Actually, it merely faded away until, by 1930, an astonished and far from totally contented world realized that, instead of having been vanquished by radio, the motion picture had instead absorbed its basic principle. While it may be rash to predict that history is about to repeat itself and the threat of television be met in somewhat similar fashion, that nevertheless is my guess.

What, on the other hand, is lacking today that we were getting in 1925? I shall not refer to those dear nostalgic elements, the printed subtitles, the real live orchestras equipped with bird whistles and thunder effects, the presence on the screen of ingenues in rolled stockings and boudoir caps, William S. Hart, the "It" girl Clara Bow, or sagacious Rin-Tin-Tin. After all, we do nowadays have Gene Autry, not to mention Rita Hayworth, and (if somewhat more confused about his sex than was the primordial dog star) we even have Lassie.

The main difference, I think, is that twenty-five or less years ago we were really living (like crocodiles in cream) in an era of hope. That other postwar generation had, I swear, much faith as well as the most pellucid hope—faith in the League of Nations, in almost automatic political and social progress, in the perfectability of man and of much else besides, including the movies. Confident that peace had been permanently won (for everyone had the franchise, did they not, and obviously no "old men" would ever again hoodwink the enlightened democracies), that era had gleefully accepted automobile rides and jazz music, arbitration, airplanes, psychoanalysis, modern painting, and was about to be convinced that there had definitely come into existence a new art proper to such lively times—the lively and popular art of the motion picture. Adumbrated by Vachel Lindsay even before World War I, this opinion had considerable impact on both sides of the Atlantic, and upon moviegoers and movie-makers alike.

With the gradual passing of wartime conditions and as interchanges became easier in the earlier Twenties, it soon became clear that films, and American films in particular, in capturing the fancy of the entire Western world were doing more than distract and amuse the multitudes in the way that—let us say—trapeze artists or waltzing bears had long amused them. They were evidently proving to be a new mode of communication as current as print, potentially as eloquent as medieval stained glass or illumi-

". . . torrid daydreams of Rudolph Valentino."

—*All motion picture photographs from Museum of Modern Art Film Library.*

". . . present delight in Anna Magnani."

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nated missal had once been to the illiterate, and moreover possessed infinite techniques and potentialities all their own. This was now suggested gradually and in various ways.

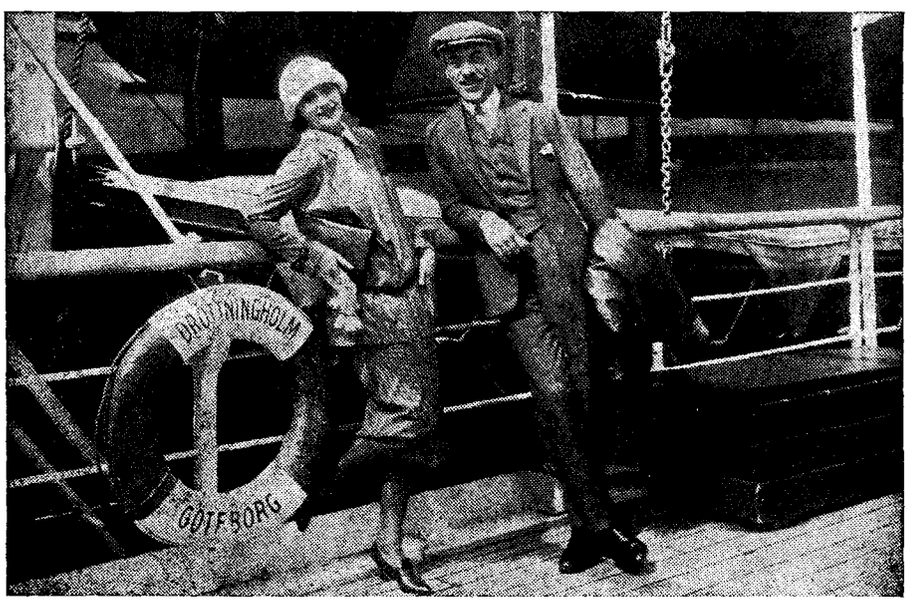
First came creeping into minor movie theatres, in and after 1921, a new and puzzling kind of film from Germany—strangely unheroic historical-costume pictures about Henry VIII ("Deception") or Madame DuBarry ("Passion") or equally baffling nightmares like "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari." At the same time, other movies, just as unfamiliar-seeming, trickled in from Sweden. Fascinated, film fans learned that the unknown persons concerned with making these same pictures were being hired by Hollywood, that Lubitsch was directing Mary Pickford in "Rosita," that German cameramen and other technicians were introducing new "angles," types of decor, and touches of sophistication to American films, while the Swedish director Stiller, accompanied by a young shy girl named Greta Garbo, had reached the film metropolis in a flutter of publicity.

More German films—"The Last Laugh," "Siegfried" — continued to arrive, but now came something else: films from the unknown new Russia put in an occasional appearance and, if few people saw them, everybody including the critics was discussing them. And it proved that these grim, violent dramatizations of Russia's revolutionary history had actually borrowed their staccato technique from American precedents—particularly from the work of the great D. W. Griffith. Hard on top of this novelty, France now contributed what was to be known as the "experimental" film, similarly reported to have been inspired by early American, or perhaps just "primitive," pictures, notably by the slapstick of Mack Sennett with his cops and chases. Most amazing of all was the fact that the more striking films of this new crop, whether from France or from Germany, had apparently been made by some kind of intellectuals, even by famous painters like Fernand Léger or folks connected with the Russian ballet, advance-guard theatre, and music.

It looked really as if these films had been made consciously *as works of art.* Hollywood, already revealing the influence of imported craftsmen or styles or ideas, was itself by now clearly anxious to be thought of as being in the art business rather than merely as a purveyor of plebeian entertainment and—if the values in Hollywood films of the period were somewhat confused, the new techniques often misapplied—along with camera angles and tricky lighting, simpler and less stage-like, subtler plots, more complex characterizations, it was evident that there too was excitement, innovation, and promise.

For almost the first time, educated people no longer slunk into movie theatres: films could be discussed openly and enthusiastically in any circle. Serious film criticism was invented. Periodicals and even books devoted to critical or esthetic consideration of films made their appearance, with the result that young persons who had never actually seen "Variety" or "Potemkin" were able to (and most certainly did) hold forth about them as eloquently as about the latest Buster Keaton comedy and Von Stroheim's "Greed."

What upsurge of ideas, techniques, claims can we discern today to parallel that dewy discovery of the film as art? Who is planning the experimental films of 1950? Admittedly, we owe far more to the introduction of the sound film than we sometimes realize—more even than the delights of Fred Astaire's, Marlene Dietrich's, or the Marx Brothers' audible and personal presence on the screen, which the silent films would have denied us. Though we must hold it against the talkies that they finally led Chaplin to speak, who would therefore have foregone "The Three Little Pigs," the machine-gun tattoo and the colloquialisms of the great gangster films, "The Lady Vanishes" and "A Night at the Opera," or the cross-talk rivalry of Bob Hope and Bing Crosby? Who would have forbidden Grace Moore to sing "Louise," Olivier to speak Shakespeare?



"The Swedish director Stiller accompanied by a young shy girl named Greta Garbo . . ."

IT is to the sound film that we likewise owe the emergence of the documentary film, nurtured first in England and in Germany before being established as a new genre here by those pioneering New Deal pictures "The Plow That Broke the Plains" and "The River," in which the functions of narrative commentary and of music in this polemical medium were brilliantly evident. From 1935 onwards many striking and earnest works of propaganda emerged—the poignant "Spanish Earth" but also the hair-raising Nazi "Triumph of the Will." These finally, and even alarmingly, demonstrated the powers of the screen as an opinion-purveying and opinion-swaying instrument.

The film's capacity to inform as well as to persuade was later to be employed, and employed conscientiously, in that series of wartime documentaries, England's "Target for Tonight," the Anglo-American "True Glory," or those combat pictures from our own armed services, so tragic and so near unbearable reality, such as "To the Shores of Iwo Jima" or "The Battle of San Pietro." Concurrently, the self-same documentary style and approach has persisted as an influence, if a relatively minor one, which has usefully shaken Hollywood free of some of its studio shackles and tired artifice in pictures like Hitchcock's "Shadow of a Doubt," Louis de Rochemont's "Boomerang," or so promising a recent "B" picture as "Home of the Brave." An even fiercer grasp at veracity has distinguished those rough, wonderfully vital films like "Open City," which—unexpectedly—have come out of the new postwar Italy. I fancy that their renown and success here would have been less had familiarity with the documentary or realist approach not paved the way.

But where in this second postwar period are the smashing great Russian films? Recent samples have been woefully pompous, static, talkative, elaborate. Perhaps they were only intended to preach to the converted, for the

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current official Soviet view of the motion picture is that it is primarily a pedagogic instrument. And what of France, old mother country of cinematography? How refreshing it was at last to be able to see a new crop of her movies—"Les Enfants du Paradis," "Les Visiteurs du Soir," "L'Eternel Retour," "La Belle et la Bête." But were they not oddly redolent of a kind of costly over-polish and escapism, even of a kind of Hollywoodism? "Monsieur Vincent" benefits hugely by the admirable portrayal of the principal role by Fresnay but exhibits a similar stateliness, while "D'Homme à Hommes" is positively stiff. (Even "La Symphonie Pastorale" struck me as somewhat stiff and quite cold.) By contrast to all that pageantry and almost self-conscious grandeur, "Le Diable au Corps" glows with the simple vigor, humanity, and sharp observation which persisted so abundantly, too, in "Goupi Mains Rouges": these continue the tradition of the best of earlier French talkies. The new star Gérard Philippé shed his effulgence over "L'Idiot"; "La Cage aux Rossignols" and "Panique" also suggested that air of improvisation, naturalism, and the warmth of feeling, the ineradicable Gallicism which we—very understandably—look for in French pictures. It is the grandiose films like "Les Portes de la Nuit" which I find baffling, despite their lavish charms.

Is it not an anomaly that the reputedly bankrupt French film industry, the unquestionably ill-equipped French studios should have sent us in the past five years so many films in the super-colossal category? Myself, I would sacrifice the whole lot of them for another "A Nous la Liberté," for that enchanting documentary "Farrebique," for "Le Diable au Corps," or, indeed for the exquisite little idyll "Une Partie de Campagne," which Jean Renoir made but left unfinished some years ago. The latter is about to come, welcome if belated, to our screens here shortly, with its enchanting air of casual good taste, improvisation, and reticence.

Looking backwards sometimes distorts the view; playing the record backwards is sour. As it is foolhardy to prophesy save in riddles, let an unreformed film fan who declared in 1929 that talkies had positively *not* come to stay, now confess to present delight in Anna Magnani, Montgomery Clift, every fourth Bugs Bunny, Samuel Goldwyn, the revivals of "Casablanca" and of "Rebecca," a recent short picture about seals, and the experimental film of the year, namely "The Quiet One." What is more, I no-wise doubt what the only illuminated text I ever won in Sunday School so bravely maintained: "It's better further on."

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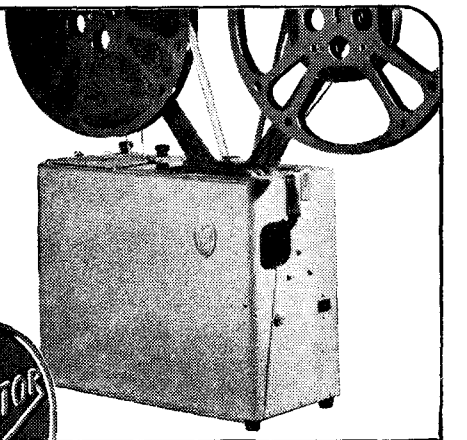

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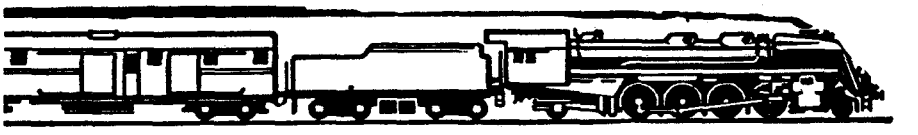

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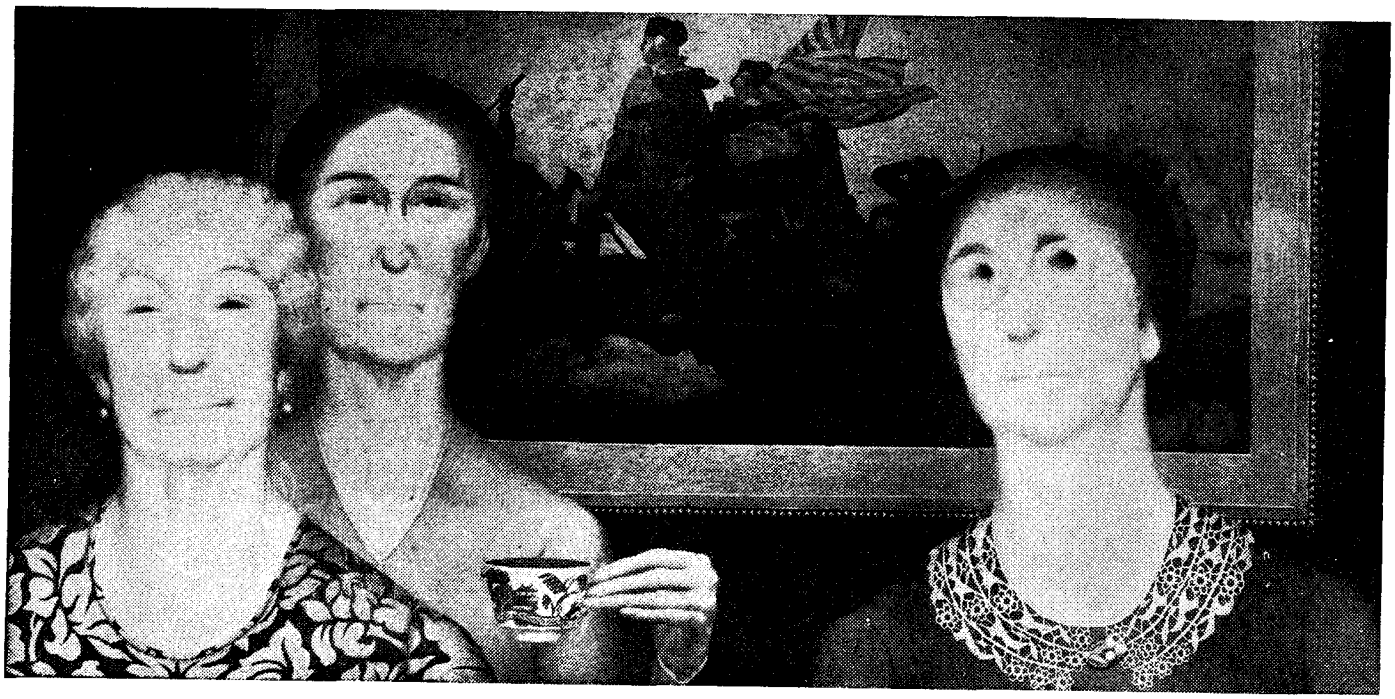

—*The Art Institute of Chicago.*

Grant Wood's "Daughters of Revolution": ". . . a hit in London [confirming] Europe's frontier romanticism toward this country."

Does Our Art Impress Europe?

JAMES THRALL SOBY

J. T. Soby

SINCE the first decade of our century American art has tended, with notable regressions, to move out into the international mainstream, to join those swift contemporary currents which have originated most often in Paris, though sometimes in Germany, and once at least (futurism) in Italy. In 1910 Stieglitz held at his famous "291" gallery the exhibition "Younger American Painters," which Holger Cahill has called the first modernist group show in America; all the artists included were aware of advanced developments in Europe. In 1913 the immortal Armory Show brought to this country the full revolutionary impact of modern art abroad, and thereafter such foreign movements as abstraction and expressionism found recruits among some of the best American painters.

The First World War did not seriously interrupt a rising internationalism of style in American art. In 1916 the Forum Exhibition of modern American painters was held at the Anderson Galleries in New York. Many of the pictures shown—especially those of Andrew Dasburg, Arthur G. Dove, Marsden Hartley, Morgan Russell, and S. Macdonald-Wright—were as thoroughly "abstract" as anything being produced today by men like Baziotes, Stamos, Pollack, Rothko, and Motherwell. Indeed the importance of recognizable subject matter was flatly denied, and one of the Forum artists declared: "In conclusion I wish to say that I make no distinction as to the value of subject matter. I believe the representation of objective forms and the presentation of abstract ideas of form to be of equal artistic value." The artist's name? Thomas Hart Benton, later so vociferous a champion of regional accuracy and nationalistic sentiment.

The regionalists' reaction against advanced international styles began, in fact, soon after *The Saturday Review*'s founding. In 1928 John Steuart Curry's "Baptism in Kansas" was shown at the Corcoran Gallery in Washington, evoking a divided response. A year or two later Grant Wood's "American Gothic" was exhibited at the Art Institute of Chicago and, in the words of the Institute's director, "the chief ikon of the [regionalist] movement was born." But regionalism was merely an exaggerated manifestation of a widespread return to realism and to native subject matter—the American Scene. Yet the reaction against foreign-born innovation had barely got under way when a second wave of abstract art hit our shores, this time carrying with it the gaudy, brave barque of surrealism. The surrealists' use of precise techniques as a means of making the fantastic seem credible helped lead to a revival of "tight" painting for its own sake, and during the early 1940's some of our younger painters pushed to extreme limits the realist tradition which had, of course, never died out here. Today, however, by far the strongest tendency among the newer men is again toward abstraction, though now toward an abstraction imbued with symbolic meaning and referring, even if obliquely, to nature's forms.

Whether accepting or rejecting Europe's lead, American art has progressed rapidly over the past twenty-five years. At least this must have been the opinion of a number of our critics who replied last spring to a questionnaire sent out by the *Magazine of Art*. One of the questions asked was how well the critics felt that today's native art "stacks up against the Old World in quality of individual accomplishment and vigor

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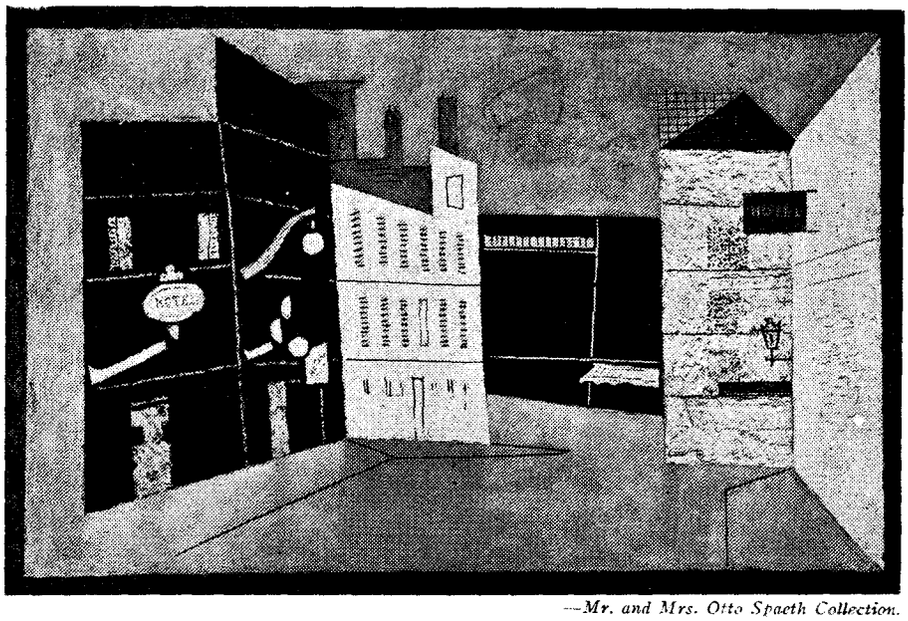
of general activity." Twenty-five years ago most of the replies would have been defiant, envious, indecisive, or discouraging. Last spring, however, a majority of the critics declared that in their opinion American art now holds up very well against European, though several of them ruled out of the comparison the surviving leaders of the original School of Paris—Matisse, Picasso, Braque, Rouault, and so on.

But are the American critics right or are they prejudiced? Certainly if the same question had been asked of a group of European authorities, the answer would have been very different. For no matter how much our art has grown in our own esteem, it has gained hardly at all in that of foreigners. This is a grave and puzzling matter. All over Europe our best writers are translated and admired, as in the past; in Italy alone Hemingway must have nearly as many disciples as in his own country. Our painters and sculptors, on the contrary, are for the most part unknown or condemned abroad, and only in architecture have we produced a name in the fine arts powerful enough to shake the European's faith in his continent's supremacy. I remember last year in Venice being asked by some Italian critics why this great and vigorous nation did not now produce great and vigorous artists. "And Frank Lloyd Wright?" I asked. "Ah, yes," they said. "He is the first in architecture everywhere."

Perhaps Wright's armor in the battle for international prestige is the only invulnerable one: absolute genius as an artist. But this equipment, alas, cannot be won in any lottery except that of birth, and we have no one else to keep Wright's pace. Nor can the armor of final greatness be simulated, though some of our painters have made effective use of substitute materials—official rank in the case of Benjamin West, wit in that of Whistler, society and fashion for Sargent, courageous femininity in the case of Mary Cassatt. Nevertheless, we have produced in painting and sculpture no figure big enough to hold the eyes of the world on himself and also, inevitably, on those of lesser stature around him. Even so, we can take hope from a curious fact about giants in the arts: when you get one, the rest come more easily. We await our first in painting and sculpture, certain that he will appear and others after him.

Meanwhile, however, there are factors which have tended to restrict American art to a peripheral importance. One of these, with all due respect, has been the Parisian bottleneck. Since the seventeenth century Paris's supremacy in the arts has been so complete that it has been challenged seriously only by a few isolated for-



—*Mr. and Mrs. Otto Spaeth Collection.*

"Rue de l'Echaude," by Stuart Davis.

—*The Jewish Museum, New York.*

"Talmudists," by Max Weber.

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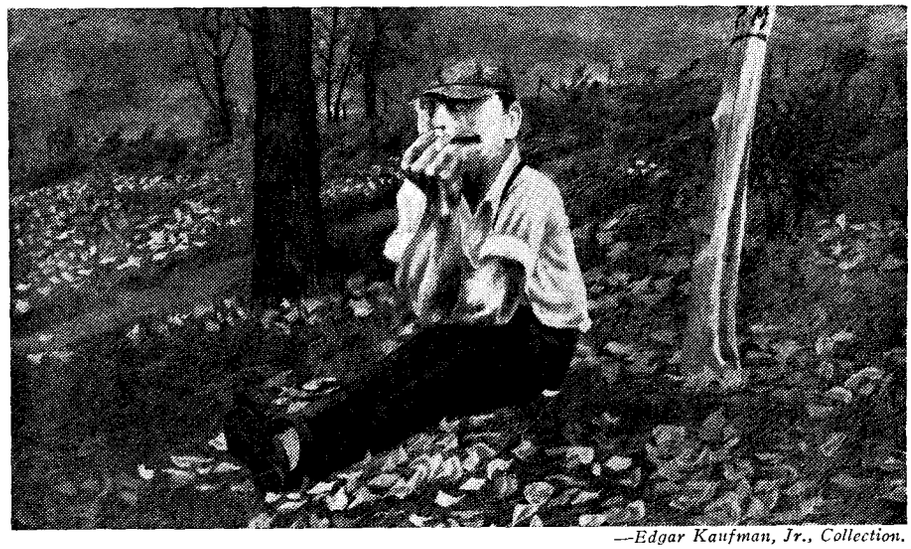
eigners like Tiepolo and Goya. No one, I think, can deny that Paris has produced or adopted more first-rank artists during the past 200 years than any other city—or country. But as part of the process alluded to above, the very stature of the great men in Parisian art has made those around them look larger rather than smaller. As a result, it has been extremely difficult in recent times for foreign artists of high but still secondary rank to crack the Parisian art front without going there to live and to become themselves Parisians. And if Paris has richly deserved its eminent place in the arts, it has sometimes taken advantage of it, exaggerating the abilities of its lesser men and underestimating artists from the outside.

In the late nineteenth century, for example, the Italian sculptor Medardo Rosso was ahead of Rodin in many respects. He was never allowed to become a formidable rival of Rodin in Paris. Similarly, most Parisian critics until very recently have given slight and grudging recognition to the Swiss-German Paul Klee—surely one of the finest and most personal masters of our time. It was Paris which first, or at any rate most damagingly, dismissed contemporary American painting as *l'École Frigidaire*. At the big display of our visual arts at the *Musée du Jeu de Paume* in 1937 Buster Keaton and Edward G. Robinson were far greater heroes of the day than Winslow Homer or John Marin. Since that date there have been several attempts to interest the French in our newer painters. They have all ended in failure.

Today, however, Paris has lost to a great extent its role as international arbiter of fame and quality in the fine arts. This is not a statement to be made gleefully; it is something to be said with humility, in full recognition of Paris's magnificent achievement, with the knowledge that her place may never again be filled. But the fact remains that we may be at the beginning of an era in which the artists of the Western world will try to communicate from country to country instead of through the Parisian switchboard. In many European nations there is a decided curiosity as to what the younger American painters and sculptors are producing. These nations are anxious to see our art at first hand and to have us see theirs.

The difficulty, so far as our part of the exchange is concerned, is that our prosperity counts so heavily against us. Because of necessary restrictions on the expenditure of funds abroad, it is almost impossible for a European to buy or even to import for exhibition purposes the works of American artists. Moreover, as Lyonel Feininger points out, "what Europe can pay would not

"11 A.M.," by Edward Hopper. —*Frank K. M. Rehn Collection.*



"Pretty Girl Milking the Cow," by Ben Shahn. —*Edgar Kaufman, Jr., Collection.*

"Excavation," by Peter Blume. —*Courtesy of the artist.*

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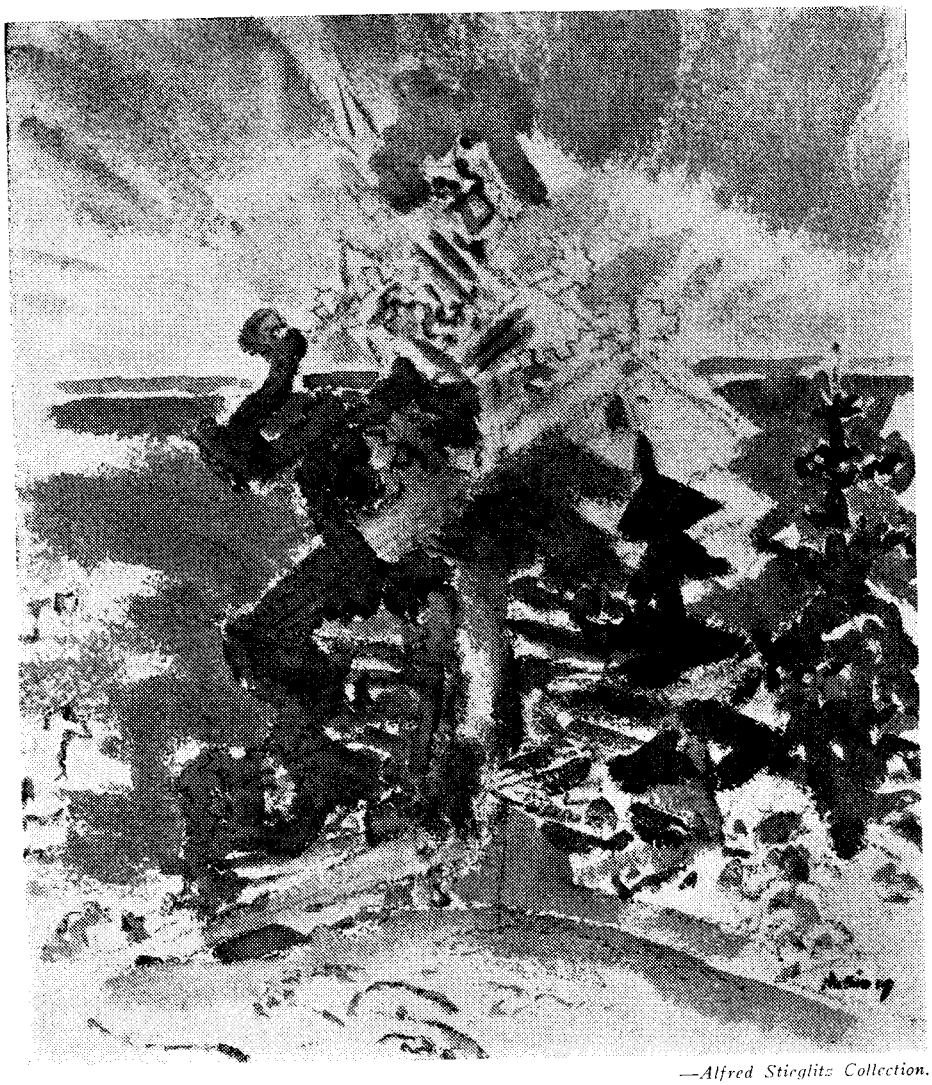
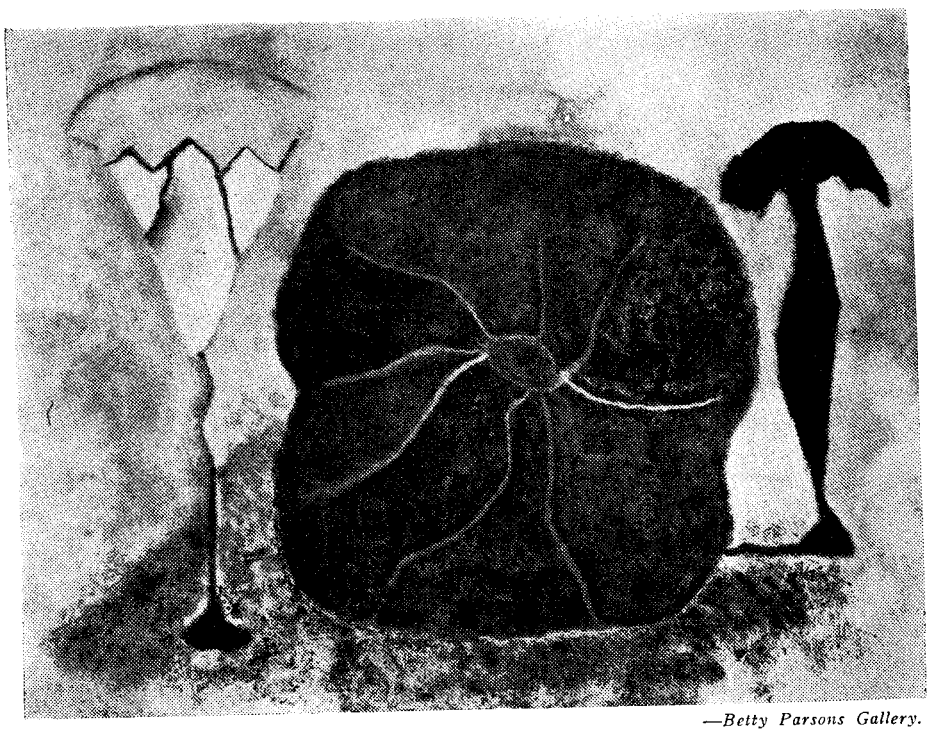


—*Alfred Stieglitz Collection.*

"Tree and Sea, Maine," by John Marin.



—*Betty Parsons Gallery.*

"Eye of Fear," by Theodore Stamos.

go far in our country." The prices of American paintings and sculptures are naturally related to the standards and costs of living in this country; they are on the average between two and four times higher than the prices of comparable works anywhere in Europe except England (where the great eighteenth-century era of collecting established art as an expensive commodity, where the nineteenth-century Pre-Raphaelites sold in their own time for staggering prices). Hence the dilemma of American artists. The one way in which most of them can have their art shown abroad is through dealers. And dealers are not interested in exporting works for which there is no likely market, though in a few prosperous cases we might expect them to be. The only possible solution to the problem of better international recognition for our painters and sculptors is Federal intervention—of which more later.

First, however, it might be well to consider the few cases in which modern American artists, as individuals, have been able to make at least an appreciable dent in European art-consciousness. Quite likely the most effective procedure is more or less permanent expatriation—the tried and successful method of West, Copley, Whistler, Cassatt, and Sargent. Of all living American painters, for example, possibly the best known in Europe has been Lyonel Feininger, who went to Germany in 1887 and remained abroad for fifty years, until his hatred of the Nazi regime forced him home. Feininger has never had a major standing in Paris, for the very reasons I have discussed above, but he played a vital part in the progressive movements of Central European art. By 1913 he was exhibiting with Klee, Kandinsky, Franz Marc, and others in the famous "Blue Rider" group. From 1919 to 1933 he was a leading figure on the staff of the Bauhaus—the most influential school for artists and designers which our century has produced thus far. In 1931 he was given a large retrospective exhibition at one of the great European museums, the National Gallery of Berlin. In short, he was recognized throughout Central Europe as one of the distinguished painters of our epoch.

A second procedure in attaining European recognition has proved workable in one conspicuous and exceptional case—that of Alexander Calder, whose fame extends to many of the capital cities of Europe, including Paris, and to those of Latin America as well. During his early career, from 1926 to 1932, Calder spent much of his time in Paris, and there became well known in art circles, first through his performances of a witty and beguiling miniature circus whose figures

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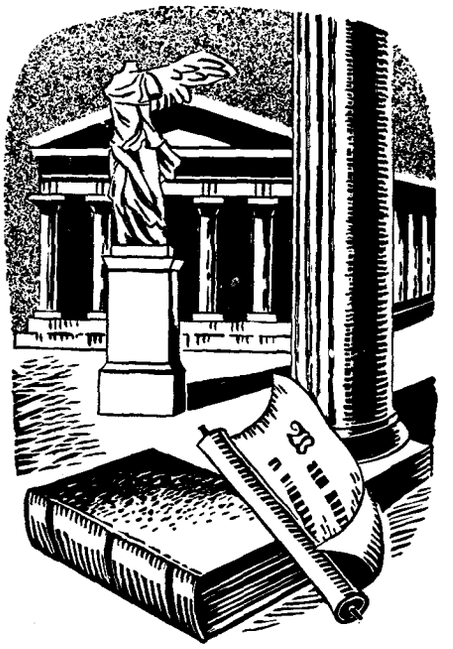
and properties he made out of commonplace materials, later through his abstract sculptures in motion, called "Mobiles." In more recent years Calder has visited and exhibited in Europe periodically. A commuter rather than an exile like Feininger, he is the latter's most serious rival in foreign esteem. But his is a rare case, understandable only in relation to his vivid personality and to an imaginative ingenuity with mechanics which Europeans cherish as an American virtue.

The third procedure, oddly enough, is that of deliberate American nationalism in art. Here, too, the odds against European success are great, and we should remember that Winslow Homer, who consistently repudiated foreign influences, made little impression on the French at the *Jeu de Paume* exhibition of 1937, though he has long been regarded at home as one of our indisputable masters. In our own time, however, an artist far more thoroughly chauvinist than Homer is quite widely admired by Europeans. This is the late Grant Wood, already mentioned as a leader of the regionalist movement of the late 1920's. Wood's "Daughters of Revolution" (see cut) was a hit in the London exhibition of American painting at the Tate Gallery in 1946, and I have heard his pictures praised by extreme-



ly critical authorities in Paris. For understandable reasons, Europeans occasionally like our art best when it looks least like their own, and "Daughters of Revolution," with its ambivalent humor and crisp intensity, confirms Europe's deeply rooted frontier romanticism toward this country, whereas more urbane manifestations of our culture do not.

If a few of our modern artists have

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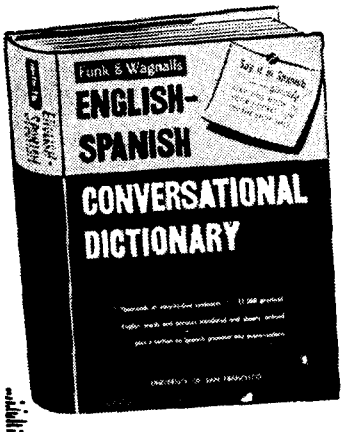
been able to impress Europe in their separate ways, the fact remains that most of our best painters and sculptors are completely unknown abroad. Should this trouble us? I think it should—profoundly. Today we are engaged in a vital struggle to help the peoples of Europe regain their strength, to persuade them that we and they are committed to the same basic ideals. One of the most effective propaganda charges used against us in this struggle is that we are a rich, vast, powerful nation, but a nation not deeply concerned with the arts or with related spiritual values. On the political front, we are accused of "dollar diplomacy"; on the cultural front, the American movie is cited in its worst examples as an indication of our materialism.

In refuting propaganda of this kind we need every means of communication we can get. Our problem, unlike that of the Russians, is not to convince our own people of democracy's advantages. Americans with few exceptions are already convinced, and to regiment artists in a nationalist cause would be to destroy the character of the cause itself. Our problem is also very different from that of Mexico, where living artists have been a major factor both in asserting national pride and in attracting a badly needed foreign tourist trade. Our most pressing task is neither to inspire ourselves nor to bring in visitors from abroad. It is to show the peoples of other nations, in their own lands, what we are really like, without attempting to distort, to aggrandize, or to conceal. Our best writers and musicians, our finest movies, our few internationally known painters and sculptors are an immense asset toward foreign understanding.

We need more assets of the kind and, in the case of painting and sculpture, we are not likely to get them without Federal aid. Several years ago the State Department took the initiative by forming a courageous if incomplete and not wholly representative collection of modern American paintings. The collection was divided into sections and sent out on tours of the principal European and Latin-American cities. By majority account, the pictures were received with great interest, and seem to have done much to dispel the legend that our contemporary art is clumsy, cold, literary, overrealistic, and, above all, backward in style. At home, however, the collection was attacked as radical and possibly subversive, in any case a waste of the taxpayer's money. The paintings were hastily withdrawn from tour and sold.

The most plausible objection to the State Department's collection was the one least frequently heard: that it had been gathered and shown by an un-



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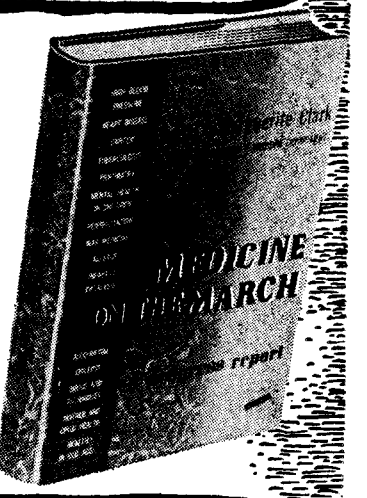

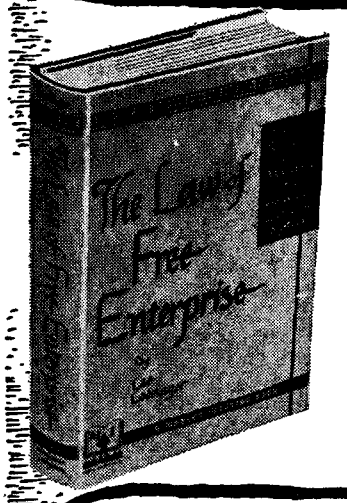

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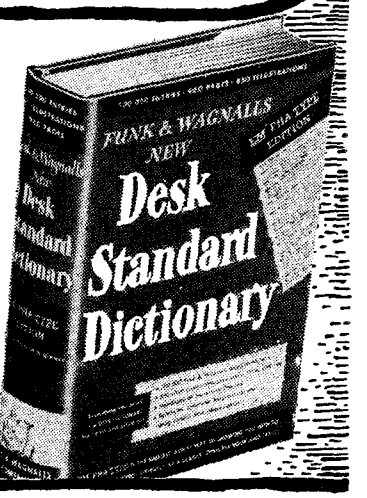

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suitable Federal agency. Organizing painting and sculpture exhibitions is obviously not the direct concern of the State Department. It should be the concern of the Federal Department of Fine Arts. The Department of Fine Arts? We have none. And here, I think, we come upon a notable failure of American art over the past twenty-five years, for all the progress made. The steadily increasing public interest in the visual arts in this country has not yet resulted in the appointment of a Secretary of Fine Arts, whose first responsibility would be the elevation of the status of American art, past and present.

There would be terrible dangers in such an appointment, of course. In the hands of a reactionary, with no proven interest in the art of our own time, the job could become an instrument of repression or could be allowed to dawdle in the mires of academic dispute and political reward. I believe we should take our chances, and hope for every conceivable precaution against the wrong person being chosen. The danger, after all, was almost equally great when the various Federal art projects of the 1930's were launched, yet no one who studies their history carefully can deny that they made an extremely important contribution to the evolution of modern American art. The names of an impressive number of our present-day leaders in painting and sculpture were once listed with the Public Works of Art Project of 1933 and with the Federal Art Project of 1935.

One of the functions of a Secretary of Fine Arts would be to encourage the revival of Federal projects such as these. Another would be to promote an exchange of exhibitions with European countries. The benefit from these two activities would be very great. But an even greater good might be the gain in dignity and standing for the arts and for artists. In European countries, even when officialdom has been hopelessly inept, as has been often the case, artists have had a more encouraging climate in which to work than here, due to governmental recognition of their profession, at least in part. In France, for example, no one questions the absolute importance of art; it is only the relative quality of various kinds of art that is the point of dispute. The same cannot yet be said of this country, despite the protestations of those who claim to detest only one species ("modern"), when in reality they are suspicious of all. Federal recognition of the fine arts' place in our civilization might help immensely, as it did during the 1930's. It might even bring about here a

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symptomatic occurrence such as that described by the painter Stuart Davis. Arriving in France in 1928, Davis was stopped at customs because of his abstract pictures which he had brought from America. The chief inspector was summoned, and Davis explained that his paintings were related to those of the cubists. "Ah, cubism," the inspector said, "but of course"—and signed an immediate release.

"No Problems"

SOON after I had gone to Europe, a youth of sixteen, to complete my musical training, I changed over to the arts to become a painter. No problems, in those days, existed for the artist in his relations to Europe. For intense work Paris and Germany proved just the right places. I stayed for many years (forcibly during World War I). After that ensued the wonderfully inspiring Bauhaus period, friendship with Gropius, Klee, Kandinsky. Naturally I stayed. When in 1931 the National Gallery's Department for Modern Art in Berlin gave me a retrospective show, headlines were: National Gallery honors American artist. No problems. After the detested Nazis had come to power I returned to America. I had been looked upon as a wilful expatriate. Alfred Barr, in the catalogue of Hartley's and my show in the Museum of Modern Art, has referred to this, in fact, first problematic relation of mine.

After World War II the American artist's relation to Europe has become a problem, one closely associated with economic questions. Artists must sell their works or else are driven into teaching or commercial jobs to make a living. American painting and sculpture have had no chance to impress the European consciousness for lack of being shown, and known sufficiently. America represents an open market for European art in almost unlimited quantity, whereas what Europe can pay would not go far in our country. Dealers don't send shows eastward, and artists have no opportunity.

The charge of being indifferent to art? I am certain that the percentage of visitors in museums here is greater than, for instance, in France. Throughout our country, whenever important exhibitions are circulated intense interest is evoked.

The charge of being unequipped? Many seedlings are planted in our soil—art is slow of growth.

—LYONEL FEININGER.

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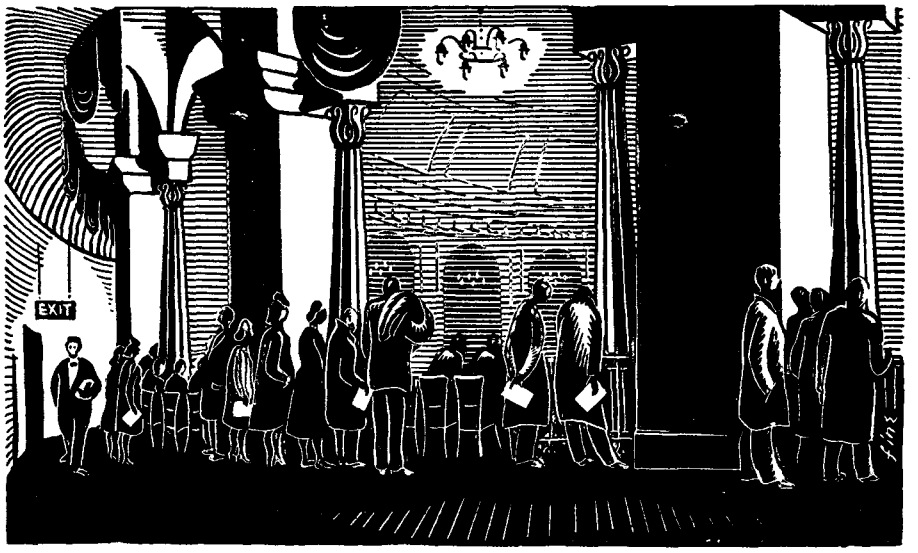

"Viva Tonal" to "FFRR"

Recorded Music Comes of Age

IRVING KOLODIN

Irving Kolodin

A properly literate American carrying home with him one of the first issues of *The Saturday Review* might well have had under the other arm the first complete album of a Beethoven symphony ever to be issued in this country. For it was in this same fall of 1924 that the Columbia Phonograph Company, emboldened by the success of its albums in England, undertook to impress the American market with such matter as the Fifth and Eighth of Beethoven, Dvorak's "New World," the Mozart E flat, and Tchaikovsky's "Pathétique," along with string quartets of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven.

A year before, the first publication in English devoted to records had appeared in England under the name of *The Gramophone*. Edited by Compton Mackenzie and enjoying the collaboration of such other literary men as Francis Brett Young and Aldous Huxley, it endures and prospers today, a symbol of the importance the English attach to what was then bravely called "phonography." Intended as a hopeful equivalent of "photography," the term has vanished but the enthusiasm has multiplied in a way that Hilaire Belloc could hardly imagine when, in the first of a series of "Epigramophones," he wrote:

> Oppressed of years, the Human Organ grows
> Less pleasing, as the Prima Donna shows.
> The gramophone escapes our common curse
> Bad to begin with, it grows no worse.

It was, in this same issue of 1923, that a correspondent from America noted that Schubert's "Unfinished," in a performance of German origin, had come into the American market for the first time. The sponsoring firm was the General Phonograph Company with offices—a floor or two away from where these words are being written—at 25 West 45th Street, New York City. The tentative incomplete was followed, a year later, by Columbia's aggressive complete. Victor responded with another incomplete (Schubert's again) and a sensational complete (the Schumann piano quintet).

It was 1925, and Franck's D minor was the "most wanted" unrecorded symphony. It was 1925, and violinists played, for recording, not on seemly instruments with proud curves and a lineage to Cremona, but on hideous makeshifts, with an ear-trumpet kind of body that poured vibrations into the megaphones that fed resonance to reluctant wax. It was 1925, and French horns turned their backs to the conductor where they played, not out of impoliteness, but for fear of spoiling still another master with their intractable tones. It was 1925, and double basses were pariahs of the orchestral family, for bassoons could still do service for cellos, and the big bull fiddle was no more at ease in a studio than his four-footed namesake in the china shop.

It was 1925 when the appearance of eighteen more Columbia albums in the American market was overshadowed by one single piece played by Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra. What they played—the "Danse Macabre" of Saint Säens—was lagniappe to the purchaser whose riches included Beethoven's C sharp minor quartet and the first symphony of Brahms. How it *sounded* was another matter.

For the first time, a trombone could be distinguished from a trumpet, an oboe from a clarinet. The violins brought their own instruments to the studio, and the French horns turned around. Radio, which was nearly to stifle the recording art in America, was still a-borning, but in the laboratories of Western Electric the thought had taken root that a system which could send sound over space and reproduce it could do as well in the closed circuit of a recording.

In place of a horn which casually gathered vibrations from the wax came the microphone, which reached out for them, sometimes with an uncontrollable appetite. What it heard, it converted into mechanical energy; when this cut was picked up and fed through an amplifying system, the sound was re-created. Infinitely more responsive than any horn, the microphone permitted cuts both higher and lower in the acoustic scale than ever before. When the home amplifying system was itself electrified, high fidelity was just around the corner.

So revolutionary was the concept, so startling the results that there was no time to think of "refinements," or of the "when" which came in train. In one leap recording passed from the barren, overworked soil of Acoustic into the fertile promise of Electric; a thousand thousand discs accumulated with love and care from 1900 on became obsolete almost at once. Beginning with Weingartner's revolutionary version of Berlioz's "Fantastique"—the first symphony to be recorded "electrically" and that in England—there has scarcely been a month since it reached the domestic shops in 1926 when the comparatives and superlatives of "realistic," "faithful," "lifelike," and the rest have not peppered the comments of even the most con-

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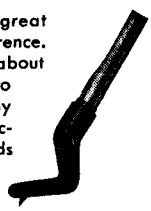

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servative critics. Such catchwords as "viva tonal," "full range," "higher fidelity" have had their day and succumbed, leaving us with today's "high fidelity" (an absolute), "live talent quality," and "full frequency range recording" as their successors.

None of this can be comprehended if it is not also comprehended that recording is a dynamic, not a static art. Its materials are artistic, but its components are scientific, meaning that an infinite gradation of improvement is possible toward the ever-luring horizon of "realism." Like the mathematical problem of the half halved, the goal is one toward which every advance makes the next advance smaller and yet more difficult—and, in fact, multiplied by two: the better record challenging the better reproducing instrument, the better instrument revealing the flaws of the *soi disant* "perfect" recording.

In this internecine warfare, several whole catalogues of records have risen to glory and fallen into obsolescence. There was the first gigantic rush of activity when the microphone reared its head in time for the Beethoven centennial of 1927 and the Schubert celebration of 1928. Though techniques were tentative and the encroaching studio was still considered the most suitable working area, a rich vein of material hitherto considered too precious for common consumption was worked to artistic and commercial profit.

The Boston Symphony came out of a retirement that had endured since 1914, when Karl Muck made the *whole* last movement of Tchaikovsky's Fourth Symphony ("indistinguishable from actuality") and began its historic work under Koussevitzky; Stokowski took to the dials like a baby lion to raw meat; and even Toscanini consented to lead the Philharmonic for Brunswick's "Panatrope" ("All Sounds") system. Surface noise glutted the grooves, and needles had, almost, to be changed in mid-record, but a man heard a triangle in his parlor for the first time, and glowed. Pickups were mentioned in pounds rather than ounces or grams, but Brunswick dared to put five minutes plus of music on a twelve-inch disc and thereby created the first "longer playing" record. No absolute such as "long playing" was ventured, even in advertising circles.

The first wave had a crest in 1929 and broke against a resistance both artistic and economic. Music was being given away, free, on the radio in greater quantities than man had ever known; and records were expensive. A full Franck might cost its devotees as much as $11 (at an index of $2 per

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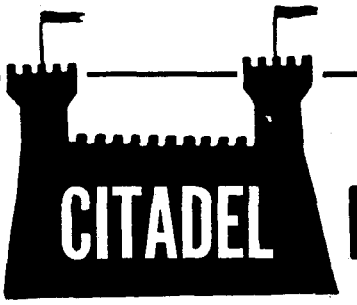
record, with an extra charge for album) but something equivalent could be had on the air for nothing. Against the historic impact of such an entertainment force as radio, the lines of "phonography" wavered and broke. Edison and General gave up their ghosts; Columbia sought higher ground for a stand and Victor "merged" with its arch tormentor to become RCA Victor. In England, Columbia and HMV (the historic affiliate of Victor here) saw the handwriting on the economic wall and combined as EMI (Electric and Musical Industries). They agreed to use common studios and technical staffs, diverging at the level of artist's contracts, repertory, and exploitation.

For much of the 1930's, recording conducted what in military terms would be called a "holding operation." RCA Victor, with its vast resources, rich catalogue, and superb complement of artists, kept alive the hopes of the enthusiasts with its Stokowski, its Koussevitzky, its Toscanini, Horowitz, and Heifetz; Columbia abandoned its high ground and sought a storm cellar from which it processed, almost exclusively, material brought in from England, where, with Government-controlled radio, there was less heavy going. Many notable discs and albums appeared during this time, but their sale was modest by any standards, and especially those of the last half decade.

When relief began to appear, it came from the least likely quarter: a revival of the popular market quickened by the refreshing breeze of Decca's lowered prices (35¢ for a double dose of Lombardo or Crosby). Came the swing vogue of 1935, with its Goodman, Dorsey, and Clinton, later its Shaw, Miller, and Basie: the "popular music you want to hear again." "Music you want when you want it" was adrenalin to a body politic surfeited by a dizzy diet of radio. Like (to continue the military simile) the crunching advance of a mechanized army into a space for maneuver, the first impact of radio had spent itself, the situation began to be "normalized."

Even while the attack was still developing, some farsighted strategists had divined the trend of retaliatory warfare. Prominent among these was Leopold Stokowski, who wrote in an article for *The Saturday Evening Post* of March 8, 1930: "Phonograph records can be better in several ways. By making them longer, so that the powerful emotional appeal of music will not be interrupted by changing the records. By cleaning out the sometimes excessive reverberation, which is a kind of tonal dirt. This is by no means impossible. By increasing the tonal range of records through electrical amplification." Other voices echoed



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these keenly prophetic words by adding to them the desire that records should be "less fragile," that if long-playing records be developed, they should be produced "at low enough cost so that they can be sold for less than an equivalent number of single discs"; and a "better kind of semi-permanent needle must be developed."

The conscientious, if premature, effort of Victor to answer these specifications is well known: it produced its long-playing, 33 rpm record with considerable ballyhoo, in September 1931, using "Vitrolac," which was semi-flexible and non-breakable. It sponsored the chromium needle and it devised an adapting mechanism, at $7.50. In the light of much later events, it is interesting to note that Columbia, through its president, H. C. Cox, didn't Go Along. Its position was stated thus: "The long-playing record, whatever its ultimate development may be is not yet commercially practicable." Unfortunately, the "long-playing" disc of that era made a changing mechanism desirable, and the records did not suit the existing changers; the chromium needle, in the heavy pick-ups then in use, was productive of an insupportable amount of surface noise, and it was discovered that "the older type of induction motor cannot be depended upon for constant speed at both rates." Something like the current Microverter was offered as attachment, but its design was primitive, its performance unreliable. In short, virtually everything was at fault save the basic idea.

Though vigorously promoted, with a surprisingly ambitious repertory that most of us have forgotten about, it made but a limited impression; it eventually retreated into a separate niche of the catalogue, and finally vanished entirely. Frustrated in its search for "new weapons," phonography reverted to first principles. It utilized its pristine strength to permanize the art of Weingartner and Koussevitzky, Beecham and Toscanini, Lotte Lehmann and Kirsten Flagstad, Heifetz, Horowitz, Szigeti, Rubinstein, Walter, and Furtwängler: the showmanship of Stokowski and Kostelanetz, the balladry of Crosby, Sinatra, and Como. Glyndebourne became known to us (through Busch, HMV, and Victor) as did the "Orfeo" of Tomasi and the Orfeo Catala of Barcelona. A harpist in Paris (Grandjany), a clarinetist in London (Kell), a tenor in Copenhagen (Schiotz) became as much a part of local culture as Burl Ives, John Jacob Niles, or Richard Dyer-Bennet. As a record of contemporary civilization, the disc embraced the Duke of Wind-

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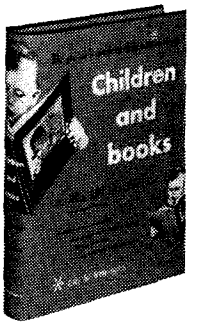

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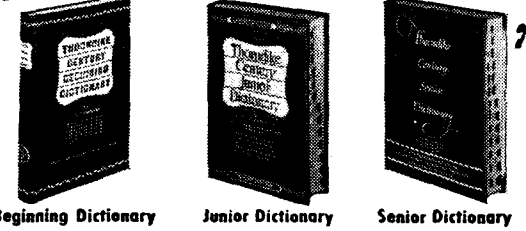

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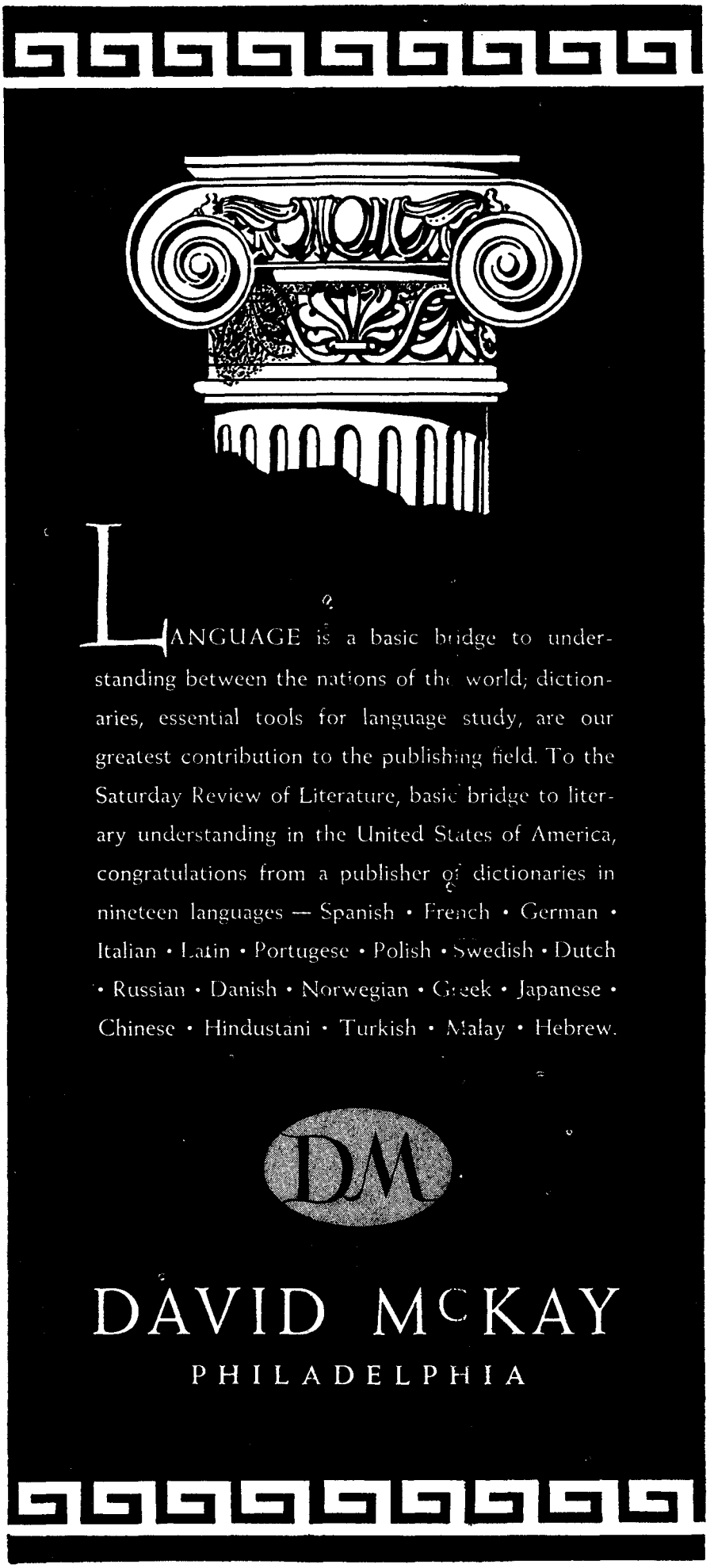
sor's "At Long Last" and the Duke of Iron's "Ugly Woman."

As it affected the American scene the regeneration of the phonograph poured its energies into the nearest accessible channel—not at all surprisingly, radio. It may have been a mere coincidence that NBC founded the orchestra celebrated as "Toscanini's" in 1938, and the Columbia Broadcasting System purchased Columbia Records, Inc., before the year was out. But those susceptible to the deeper trends in American culture know, if they cannot prove, that such a prestige gesture of one sort could hardly go unchallenged without a retaliatory one. For the while, CBS-CRC could, somewhat timidly, only offer Howard Barlow's Haydn No. 94 as answer to Toscanini's "Clock"; but it was not a very long while until Columbia had gathered the Cleveland, the Chicago, the Minneapolis, and the Philharmonic of New York to its side, and cut the price of all twelve-inch records to a dollar, in the summer of 1940. Willingly or not, RCA followed. When Columbia reached out for the Philadelphia (just before Pearl Harbor) and Victor signed up the National (in Washington), the St. Louis, the Dallas, the San Francisco, *and* the Indianapolis, it was evident that recording in America had entered a new phase.

Historians may mull over the kind of situation that might have resulted had there been no war, and importations from abroad continued at the usual pace. Journalists, however, must note that there was a war, that records were one of a very few luxury items not curtailed by shortages, and, that the industry here was cast upon its own resources as never before. There ensued, then, the creation of a whole new catalogue (of the sort mentioned previously) which, inhibited though it was by two Petrillo bans, brought into existence competitive versions of virtually all the standard works, and many non-standard ones. It brought into existence, finally, a whole new concept of recording—the LP or Long Playing record—which restores to American enterprise the leadership it once had with the Western Electric innovation of electrical recording.

But that principle, as currently exploited, has a number of plus and minus factors not previously reckoned with. As advantage, it can cite mechanisms better adapted to reveal its qualities than those of fifteen years ago, including much lighter pickups, semi-permanent needles, more favorable surface materials, dependable motors, and a finer cut that makes it truly a *long*-playing record; plus (and this should be underscored heavily) a market more receptive to album-length material of *many* kinds — "original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cast" recordings of show music, "showcases" for individual artists, nostalgic collections of all sorts, "I Can Hear It Now" and "You Are There"—to point the way further for an esoteric privilege to become a common utility.

Against these advantages must be reckoned the higher standards of quality imposed first by English Decca with its full frequency range recordings, and, more recently, the various prewar importations from Germany which show that "phonography"—to resurrect that expressive if unhonored term—flourished years ago in a fashion we are only beginning to realize now, a decade later. Moreover, it is quite evident now that any of these "originals" can be constituted as American LP's, with the advantages inherent thereto, by the application of sufficient science and technological knowledge.

What, then, is the lesson to be derived from this twenty-five years of intensive, extensive, and sometimes expensive activity? It is, I think, the lesson that the history of recording is the history of one continuous conflict between the insuperable creative of re-creative art, and the easily superseded reproduction of it. It is the recorder's business to concentrate, at the moment of registration, on the best possible performance of the work involved, whether it is Schubert's "Ständchen" for the ninetieth time, or Schönberg's violin concerto for the first. We listen now to Caruso's "Rachel, quand seigneur" or Chaliapin's "Midnight Review," though each is but a dim semblance of later reproductions, because each was an authentic, an irreplaceable experience. That permanence endures, despite mechanical improvements of all sorts, as token of the magnificent, the unique thing the phonograph is. Given this durable substance to begin with, all other values will follow.

Book Marks

H. L. Mencken is by no means the first author to use *chrestomathy* in a book title. He is, by our reckoning, no better than the eleventh (if we may be permitted to include languages other than English). First in the field appears to have been Bernhard Dorn's "Chrestomathy of the Pushtu and Afghan Languages," issued (not, one surmises, in great quantity) at St. Petersburg in 1847. The New York Public Library cards show five books with *chrestomathia* in the title and four with *chrestomathie.* None of them sounds as readable as Mencken.

* * *

A lot of contemporary novelists are having trouble with their antecedents, and we don't mean fractious grandparents. The three most treacherous words in the English language are he, she, and it.

* * *

Intimate glimpses of great authors: William Cullen Bryant exercised with Indian clubs. Victor Hugo had a cat named Gavroche (after a character in "Les Miserables"). Nathaniel Hawthorne smoked cigars. George Eliot had her manuscripts handsomely bound. Thomas Carlyle used an outsize teacup. Thomas Babington Macaulay was hit in the face by a dead cat. Sir Walter Scott's parents, in an attempt to cure him of his lameness, used to wrap him naked in the skin of a freshly slaughtered sheep. Charles Kingsley treated a sore finger by holding a red-hot poker against it. Anthony Trollope invented the mailbox. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's first payment for writing was Chatterton's works in three volumes. Mark Twain and Conan Doyle played billiards, but were never matched against each other. Doyle would have won.

* * *

It's Smithsonian Institution, not Institute. It's Welsh rabbit, not rarebit. The man was Daniel Shays, not Shay. And Oliver Wendell Holmes didn't call Boston "the hub of the universe."

* * *

Literature these days is at least a moderately healthful occupation. A recent *Authors' League Bulletin* gives a necrology covering several months and listing eighty-four names. In all but two instances, ages are given. Of the eighty-two writers, editors, and publishers cited, forty lived to be seventy or over, and of these seventeen reached or passed eighty, and four attained ninety or better. The dean of the group was Wilfred Meynell, ninety-five.

* * *

What superlative accolade is inherent in the description of an author as "a writer's writer"? Isn't it enough and to spare to be a reader's writer?

* * *

Can anything be ajar except a door?
—J. T. W.

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Flowering of American Music

HOWARD HANSON

Howard Hanson

SOME time ago Dr. Serge Koussevitzky remarked to me that the real beginning of American music dates from about twenty-five years ago and added, with that well-known mischievous twinkle in his eye, "That was when you came to Rochester and I came to Boston!" It is true that the past quarter century which has witnessed the distinguished Boston Symphony conductor's magnificent work for contemporary music and the Eastman School's twenty-five year program for American music, has marked an enormous development both in the quantity and quality of American composers and their output. It also marks the first time in musical history when the American composer has reached a point both in craftsmanship and in creative ingenuity where his work has been considered as a part of the contemporary music of the world, neither insular nor parochial.

When one considers that the entire history of American symphonic music covers only about seven decades this sudden flowering of American musical art in the second quarter of this century seems to raise the question, does the United States today stand at the threshold of a new golden age of musical creation? Our only possible clue to the answer to this question may be found in comparing this age with those periods of musical history which have been especially productive. If I read history correctly, there seem to be several conditions which are always found in any period and country which makes an important contribution to music literature. These elements seem to be constant, whether one is discussing the great era of Italian polyphony in the sixteenth century, or the development of German music from the time of Bach and Handel up to the third quarter of the nineteenth century.

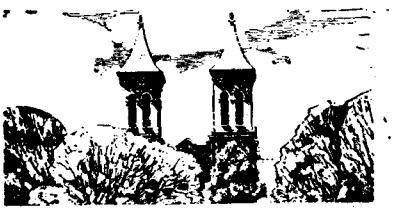
These elements consist, first, of a wealth of creative talent as evidenced in the number of composers writing music. This is, I believe, a *quantitative* as well as a qualitative matter. There are few instances in history where one great figure in the world of composition has developed alone. Where one genius arises we find his work mirrored in the writings of others. These others may themselves be composers of distinguished ability approximating that of the master himself. Palestrina did not stand alone. He was no solitary figure. His colleagues numbered dozens of creators approaching—and perhaps in certain cases equaling—his own stature. The same can be said of the flowering of German music in the nineteenth century. Brahms and Wagner had as contemporaries in Germany a host of composers of importance.

Second, there must be ample opportunities for the technical education of the young composer, whether by some system of apprenticeship or in formalized schools of music.

Third, in such periods there seems to be a natural relationship between composer and performer. Music is written to be performed and heard. There is an understanding and sympathy between the creator and interpreter. The composer lives in no ivory tower, but moves in the thoroughfare of practical music life. He is not above writing for a specific purpose or occasion, and he does not feel it necessary to justify his actions by labeling his music *gebrauchsmusik* All of his music is *gebrauchsmusik*.

Fourth, in such periods there must be an audience for the music of its own time. The public is a willing and interested listener to new music. Such a public expects music to be written and expects to hear it. It has a musical tradition which belongs to the past, but is not slavish in its worship. It does not believe that all of the music of the world has already been written.

There is evidence today that certain



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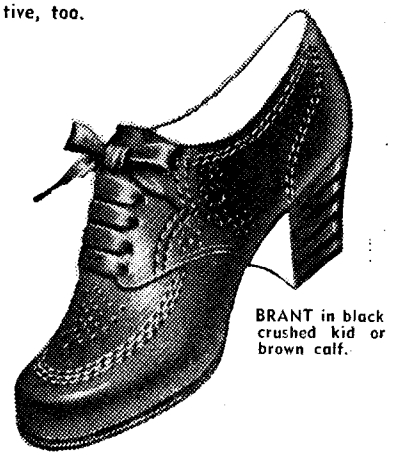

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of these conditions already exist and that others are developing. The first condition is already met. The number of composers writing today in the United States is formidable. Since the beginning of the American Composers' Concerts in Rochester in 1925 we have at the Eastman School alone performed over a thousand works by more than four hundred American composers. It is common to have eighty to a hundred scores submitted for each program, most of these scores coming from young, unknown composers. At the American Music Students Symposium in Rochester last year *sixty-seven* selected works by composers from the Eastman School of Music, the Juilliard School, the New England Conservatory, the Curtis Institute, the Royal Conservatory of Toronto, Yale, and Northwestern universities were performed. When one considers the fact that in the music schools of thirty years ago a student of composition was a curiosity, the contrast is startling. It would seem that the young composers writing in the United States today number literally in the thousands.

Second, the facilities for the training of the young composer, which were so meager thirty years ago, are now present in abundance. The last three decades have marked the establishment of three great endowed schools of music, the Juilliard School of Music, the Eastman School of Music, and the Curtis Institute, in chronological order, at least two of which consider the education of the composer as one of their most important tasks. This emphasis upon creation, in an educational atmosphere which up to that time had stressed primarily performance, rapidly influenced other institutions to stress equally the arts of creation and interpretation.

Today, there is not a first-rate school of music which does not consider its composition department as one of its most important. Even the smaller schools of music today frequently have flourishing departments of composition. Most of them supply not only adequate instruction in the theory and art of composition, but also see to it that the young student has, whenever possible, opportunities for the performance of his works. This is a far cry

Your Literary I. Q.

By Howard Collins

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF LITERARY FAVORITES

By way of celebrating *SRL*'s silver anniversary, we present what is by all odds the easiest quiz to appear in this department. Listed in chronological order are the best-known books from 1925 to 1949. Match the titles with their authors. Allowing four points for each correct answer, a score of eighty-eight is par, ninety-six is good, and 100 just about what one has a right to expect of *SRL* readers. Answers on page 166.

1.	"Soundings"	( )	Hervey Allen
2.	"The Private Life of Helen of Troy"	( )	Pearl Buck
3.	"Elmer Gantry"	( )	Dale Carnegie
4.	"The Bridge of San Luis Rey"	( )	John Roy Carlson
5.	"All Quiet on the Western Front"	( )	A. J. Cronin
6.	"Cimarron"	( )	Lloyd C. Douglas
7.	"The Good Earth"	( )	Dwight D. Eisenhower
8.	"The Fountain"	( )	John Erskine
9.	"Anthony Adverse"	( )	Edna Ferber
10.	"While Rome Burns"	( )	A. Hamilton Gibbs
11.	"Green Light"	( )	Marion Hargrove
12.	"Gone with the Wind"	( )	Russell Janney
13.	"How to Win Friends and Influence People"	( )	Sinclair Lewis
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15.	"The Grapes of Wrath"	( )	Betty MacDonald
16.	"How Green Was My Valley"	( )	John P. Marquand
17.	"The Keys of the Kingdom"	( )	Margaret Mitchell
18.	"See Here, Private Hargrove"	( )	Charles Morgan
19.	"Under Cover"	( )	Marjorie K. Rawlings
20.	"Strange Fruit"	( )	Erich Remarque
21.	"Forever Amber"	( )	Lillian Smith
22.	"The Egg and I"	( )	John Steinbeck
23.	"The Miracle of the Bells"	( )	Thornton Wilder
24.	"Crusade in Europe"	( )	Kathleen Winsor
25.	"Point of No Return"	( )	Alexander Woollcott

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from the student days of my generation.

The third condition, the *rapprochement* between the composer and the performer, has not yet been fully realized. In certain fields, such as the orchestra, there has been of late a tendency to consider American compositions a natural and proper part of the orchestral repertory. In the field of the virtuoso instrumentalist this is not yet true. The programs of the concert pianist are still made up in large part of the repertory of the past with a few excursions into the contemporary.

Among students, however, this same ultra-conservatism does not appear. The present generation of student performers is interested in the compositions of fellow-student composers and plays them with that understanding which comes from similarity of viewpoint. At the Eastman School a young performer will frequently "commission" a young composer to write a work. I doubt if the financial value of the commission is significant. What is significant is that the composer is writing in the stream of musical life, for performance by his own colleagues. This warm personal interest is a heartening sign for it signals the end of the ivory-tower days and a return to the time when all music was music for performance. One of my most thrilling experiences was to conduct the Eastman Senior Symphony last year in a concert of orchestral works of student composers. The students played these works with an enthusiasm, an abandon, a brilliance, and a devotion which could not have been greater had each work represented the greatest conception of a Beethoven, a Brahms, or a Wagner.

There are signs that the listener is not far behind. In conducting concerts of American music with various orchestras in the country, I am always impressed with the number of young men and women who come back to the green room after the performance and discuss the music of Harris, Hanson, or Piston, and who discuss this music with an understanding born of acquaintance. Much of this acquaintance has come through recordings, again emphasizing the fact that the record and the phonograph are fundamental tools in the development of musical understanding.

All of these conditions, which are being fulfilled today and which, as I have pointed out, are similar to conditions which existed in the golden ages of composition in the past, indicate the possibility that we may be entering in this country upon our own golden age. Whether it will come in our lifetime I do not know, but the signs of spring are everywhere. The buds seem about to burst into bloom.

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Aaron Copland is "the musical son" of both Gershwin and Stravinsky.

in the United States today who in their own creation, their teaching, and their general influence upon our musical life sum up the forces which will influence the direction of composition in the United States for a number of years to come. These men, curiously enough, all began their active work in the third decade of this century, the decade which Dr. Koussevitzky has referred to as the beginning of musical composition in the United States. Most of these men have, naturally, European antecedents, for most of us are of European descent and it is difficult for any man to be born without ancestors. I shall not attempt to place them in order of importance but shall discuss each of them at random.

The first is George Gershwin. The importance of Gershwin's contribution lies in the fact that he struck a death-blow at the stuffiness which was beginning to pervade the concert hall, a blow which also felled the tradition of what was "proper" in symphonic music. I recall walking out of Carnegie Hall with Willem Mengelberg after he had conducted an abstruse work by a contemporary composer. Mr. Mengelberg asked me how I liked it. I replied that it seemed slightly "wormy" to me with chromatic counterpoints working their way up from the contra-bassoon to the piccolo. "It is a sairioos vork," said Mr. Mengelberg, "a verry sairioos vork." And then with a twinkle in his eye—"perhaps, *too* sairioos!"

GERSHWIN'S music was the antithesis of all that was over-intellectual, over-philosophical, over-"serious." He brought play back to music. His music was gay, witty, emotional, but always fun to listen to, and under-girding it were the rhythms of the popular dance, the rhythms which brought lightness to the feet.

His effect on American music has been enormous. Hardly any of us but has been influenced at least by some of his rhythmical devices and by the timbre of his orchestral scores. Many of his colleagues also contributed importantly to this influence, including, undoubtedly, unknown popular orchestrators who assisted men like Gershwin and Jerome Kern in the preparation of their scores. It is proper, however, that Gershwin should receive first credit because it was he who successfully bridged the gap which separated popular from serious music. His influence has been strongest on such men as Aaron Copland, Morton Gould, and Robert Russell Bennett—whose symphonic metamorphosis on the material of "Porgy and Bess" is a masterpiece of orchestration.

ANOTHER influence is that of Aaron Copland himself. The influence of Gershwin and of American popular dance music—and recently of Latin-American dance music—upon Copland is readily apparent. His "Music for the Theatre"—which I know well, having conducted it both in concert and for records—might have been written by a more technically sophisticated Gershwin. What complicates the line of descent is the fact that Copland is also the musical son of Stravinsky. The two influences are not antipathetic since both Gershwin and Stravinsky are primarily masters of the dance. Copland, too, is a master of rhythm but his melodic invention has never equaled that of Gershwin or the earlier Stravinsky.

Of late, his music seems to have grown increasingly simple and direct, especially in such a work as the "Ap-

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palachian Spring" with its undertones of folklike music. What constitutes his real self is still not apparent, for he seems to glorify a Mexican hot-spot, "Billy the Kid," and Abraham Lincoln with equal enthusiasm. This somewhat opportunistic impartiality may lead some critics to question his basic convictions, but it requires no critic to sense the rhythmic urgency of his music. Twenty-three years ago I conducted the first performance of Copland's early score, "Cortège Macabre." On that occasion he played for me on the piano a new score on which he was working. I have no confidence that the notes which he played were all in the score. In fact, it seemed to me at times almost as though the exact notes did not matter. The rhythmic energy was, however, terrific, and it was apparent at which altar of the Muses Copland would offer his oblations.

Copland's influence, both as a composer and as a teacher at Tanglewood, has been great. It has been felt particularly by younger composers such as David Diamond and Marc Blitzstein. In others, it is more difficult to tell whether the influence is that of Copland, or of Stravinsky translated into Coplandese.

The third basic influence is that of Walter Piston. He has been reputedly labeled a "neo-classicist," but, in my opinion, this does him less than justice. The term neo-classicism seems too frequently to be applied to music possessing form but without grace, wit, or melody. I have conducted too many works of Mr. Piston which have had all of these qualities in abundance to want to accept this inadequate label. It has perhaps become attached to him because of his highly superior craftsmanship. If I were asked to name the two American composers who best *know how* to write music, I should unhesitatingly name Walter Piston and Leo Sowerby. Their music has nothing in common except this quality of superb craftsmanship. Piston's influence is much greater because his music is more fully emancipated from tonal chromaticism and, therefore, seems to have no impression of moving into the future looking backward. Piston's influence upon the younger composers is less obviously apparent because it must be observed in details of workmanship rather than in the reflection of his personal style—which is difficult to imitate.

The fourth influence is that of Roy Harris. This is a strange influence, difficult to analyze or describe, primarily because Mr. Harris is difficult to analyze or describe. Of all the composers I have mentioned he is the only one who has a "method" of composition. I do not use this word in any opprobrious sense, but it is impossible to discuss either Harris's music or his

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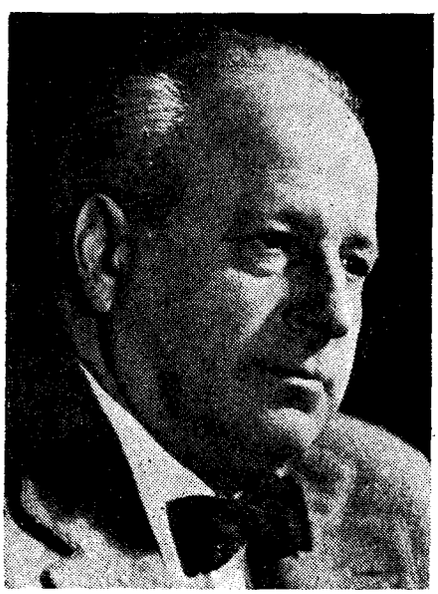
influence on young composers without speaking of it.

Harris, in spite of his long study of counterpoint—or perhaps it could as easily be said, on account of it—is primarily concerned with consonant harmony. His works frequently depend for long sections upon a continuous harmonic shifting from triad to triad with the melodic lines singing through them. This frequently produces an impression of lack of any harmonic purpose or direction, which is baffling to the listener. And yet, when he frees himself from this chain of entwining triads he may soar to heights seldom attained by other composers. His musical ancestors seem to go back to the sixteenth and, perhaps even more definitely, to the fifteenth century.

I have always had an almost paternal regard for Roy Harris, for I had the privilege of conducting the first performance of the first work which he wrote for orchestra. Already in this young work, imperfectly realized though it was, could be discovered that intensity, the rough and sometimes awkward span of melody groping toward emotional realization. In such a work as his "Third Symphony," his aims seem to find complete expression and I still regard this work as one of the few great American symphonies.

His influence on his students has reflected his own deep conviction. Most important among them is the highly gifted and brilliant William Schuman and his younger colleague, Robert Palmer.

The fifth influence is perhaps that of the Eastman School of Music and of the author. My own musical ancestor has been widely proclaimed to be Sibelius. This is undeniably true to



—*Boosey & Hawkes.*

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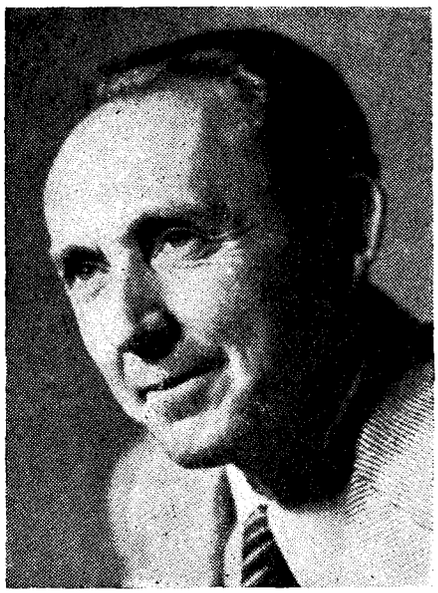

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Roy Harris sometimes "may soar to heights seldom attained by other composers."

the extent that the Scandinavian folk melodies and dances which have moved Sibelius were a part of my musical memory as a child—and my own "Nordic Symphony" was written before I had heard a symphony or tone-poem by the Finnish master. My three greatest loves have been the music of Grieg, Handel, and above all, Palestrina, who seems to me to have possessed the most complete understanding of the relationship of tone of any composer who has ever lived. I am trying to develop in my own students an understanding of music as an art of sound, teaching them that it is not the appearance of music on the printed page that counts, nor the particular theory embodied in its construction, but only how it sounds, and its affecting power upon the mind through the ear.

I have tried to make the large number of gifted young men who have come under my influence sensitive to tonal values so that each composer may select from the vast encyclopedia of musical relationships those which best enable him to express his own creative personality. This Eastman tradition is being ably carried on by such gifted young composers as Peter Mennin, Louis Mennini, William Bergsma, Burrill Phillips, Kent Kennan, Wayne Barlow, Robert Palmer, Gardner Read, Ulysses Kay, Herbert Inch, Robert Ward, Frederick Woltmann, to name but a few. A detailed listing of these young men would of itself constitute a fairly complete cross-section of the last quarter century of American music.

There are three foreign composers now living in America whose writing has powerfully influenced the young composer—Stravinsky, Schönberg, and Hindemith. I have already referred

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briefly to Stravinsky. It is something of a tragedy that the influence both of Stravinsky and Schönberg should, through the coincidence of history, be exerted upon the young American composer at a time when their own creative powers are waning. The influence of the Stravinsky of "Fire Bird," "Petrouchka," the "Sacre," "Les Noces," and "Symphony of Psalms" is the impact of a strong, dynamic, creative mind. The influence of the latest Stravinsky symphony is in my mind another matter. In spite of the countless physical, economic, and spiritual problems which beset the present-day composer, the era ahead does not need to be sterile. It might become so, if we follow the wrong guides.

The problem of Schönberg is simpler in one sense, and more complicated in another. Since his determined effort to throw off the Wagnerian yoke, apparent in such an early but moving work as "Verklärte Nacht," he has set up a self-imposed tonal discipline which seems to be more at home in the laboratory than in the composer's study. I shall not ape the critics by attempting to pass judgment on this gifted man. His influence, so powerful in Europe in the earlier decades, has seemed to be considerably less potent in the United States. There are many composers who have come under his influence, but only those who became disciples have remained faithful. Even they have had only a minor influence as their music has not been widely

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...confesses an overwhelming urge to invite every reader of the Saturday Review's noble 25th-anniversary issue to attend our own celebration eight Sundays hence—the 25th anniversary issue of the Weekly BOOK Review to be published September 25, 1949

in the

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Herald Tribune

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...a backward but not wistful glance at the books and book reviewing of the past quarter-century...

...a forward and inquiring look at the trends and undercurrents which will produce the books ahead of us...

heard. I do not believe that the almost mechanical methodism which his theories impose is a natural part of the young, vital, creative age which I hope we are developing.

Paul Hindemith, on the other hand, has had, and continues to exert, a strong influence. A master craftsman, possessing a logical mind of great keenness, and with a technical approach which is more understandable to the student than that of his great Austrian colleague, Mr. Hindemith is laboring indefatigably both as creator and teacher in the propagation of his ideas. America is fortunate in having men of such eminence teaching in its colleges. Whether they will assimilate the student, or whether the American student will assimilate them, it is yet too early to see.

Out of these influences have come a plethora of styles, technical points of view, and esthetic philosophies. Can all of these heterogeneous modes of music-making live together and develop in peace and harmony? If they can, there is a possibility that the new world may at last lead the old in the arts as well as in the sciences and economics. Such a possibility, however, calls for a greater tolerance and a nobler consecration to beauty than we have yet seen. The world of music is still too full of raucous voices shouting, "You must do this, you dare not do that; this, and this only, is the one true path!" Frequently the voices which cry the loudest for the freedom of the artist are those which would cast the heaviest chains. Too often differences in viewpoint harden into tightly knit, arrogant cliques, each braying loudly for the rights of the artist, but intolerant of everyone who is not of its own herd.

America is broad enough to embrace every honest conception of truth and beauty. It is great enough to inspire many men in many ways. It is tolerant enough to grant to every artist the right to sing his own song.

Public Gardens

By Frances Minturn Howard

THERE is a spell on these blue walks tonight,
Pollen of love upon the gentle air,
Music subtler than sound to which these lovers wander
Two and two, two and two, with soft identical gesture
In a pattern formal, repetitive and ancient,
And new as green uncurling from a bough.
Why should these white trees whirl against the dusk,
More luminous than in full glare of sun,
Littering the ground with spendthrift glory
As if they made a mirror of the grass
Spilling their own white image back again?
Why should the bridge tonight have taken off
Into the blue recessive evening sky? Round pearls
Of light mark the ascent, dim-burning planets
Above a stairway with no end in view.
In the black water sleepless ducks revolve
Two and two, two and two, a pair of floating questions
Drifting above the golden hives of light
The street-lamps paint upon the waveless pond.
And up and down the paths
The petaled faces of lovers
Float on the dark, intoxicate with scent,
Their eyes intent as walkers in a dream
Two and two, two and two, as if their slow feet trod
The winding paths of some green cunning maze
Whose center lay in this enchanted park.
Two and two, two and two, arm seeking waist,
Hand cupping breast in gentle formal gesture
As if some music that they listened to
Required just this motion, that response.
This light air turning up the sudden leaves
Is made of sighs scudding across the grass
Warmer than any stirring of the wind.
The feet of the walkers slow as the sky grows darker,
Faces turn upwards in dim-seeking gesture,
Yet still there is no moon.
The scent grows heavier over the twisted paths,
And the darkness is lit by the haunted eyes of lovers
Flitting in pairs among the shadowed trees,
Their petaled faces white upon the grass.

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THE UNPROMISING YEARS

(*Continued from page 91*)

and the beginnings of the obscurantist schools in poetry and fiction which are arising and confounding us today. A school of writing made its appearance in which bewildered self-taught economists dreamed of utopias based on science and the machine. Still another large group, which included many critics, developed the novel of social significance as the only literature worth the attention of a depression-ridden country. They produced as a result some of the worst and the dullest books ever written. But during this apparent chaos the creative energy of our writers was still fresh and vigorous. Thomas Wolfe poured out his repetitive but magnificent floods of epic narrative. Fitzgerald chronicled the jazz age and prophetically named one of his books "The Beautiful and the Damned." Fitzgerald was a brilliant interlude in the deepening gloom. There was no sign of thought or responsibility in the gilded narcissists in whose depressing and alcoholic gaiety he illustrated a feverish excitement before final dissolution.

Ernest Hemingway, as different from Fitzgerald as night and day, brought a new element into the novel, as if he alone was conscious of the brutality and male vigor that would soon be required of the American youth whom other writers revealed as sunk in confusion and misery or thoughtless debauchery. The toughness and virility of the American soldier was foreshadowed in his novels and stories; he was the voice and the hope of the lost generation. There was a strong wish for death in his work, a cult of violence which fitted the time when gangsters were murdered at large over the country and the Spanish Revolution was an ominous portent on the horizon. The style that Hemingway invented, his terse and forceful dialogue admirably suited his death message for the future and was adopted by a legion of young writers who found in it an easy way of escaping some of the accepted rules for literary composition. Like Fitzgerald he belonged to the world of the expatriates in Paris and on the Riviera whom he satirized in his first book.

John Steinbeck became the novelist of the Depression. He was as much in revolt against all forms of puritanism as he was against the economic exploitation of the industrial worker or the wretched fruit pickers in California. His epic novel, "The Grapes of Wrath," has been satirically called "the poor man's 'Uncle Tom's Cabin'!" With other writers, and dramatists

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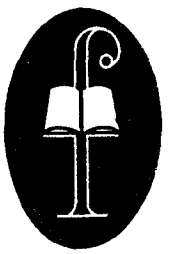

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like Saroyan and Odets, he developed a sentimental attitude toward the tramp and the drunkard that was a peculiar product of the period.

These were the writers on whose future work and whose influence so much of our new literature had depended. During the war the silence of those among them who were still creatively vigorous was an ominous sign. Those who continued to write, it soon appeared, had nothing new to say of a transformed America. The aridness of life revealed by so many of them in the past could not suit the new temper of the country. The older writers seemed to be searching in vain for an enlargement of their sources of creation. But we still hoped that when the war was over the spectacle of this country now engaged in another form of battle would produce writers to bear witness to it. That they have not yet appeared does not mean that they will not.

Perhaps these coming writers will not repeat the destructive tendency of those of ten years ago. The pillars of the temple have been cast down. If they cannot be erected again after this war, it will not be worth the trouble to level what remains of the edifice. The writers who are to come will everywhere search for inequality and social prejudice, for the crimes and sins in our system of life, but they will not assume that it has been ordained by fate. They will believe that their light may illuminate the dark places, and that there will follow some remediable measures. The men and women of the Twenties and Thirties despaired; the writers of the Fifties will know that they have to create a shelter for mankind's hope and belief in freedom, or that they will perish and mankind with them.

The literature of our day attacks, but not wholly in despair. Writers have a goal, and the pressure of events permits unhappily of little levity, or optimism. It would be pleasant to supply that relief, to deny that our literature and our culture are in danger of another war for only the scholar or the philosopher can live in the shadows of the four horsemen.

For the first time we may begin, as a country, to know the true countenance of fear, for in all our history since this nation was founded we have never entered a war which we did not feel, deep down in us, that we would win. But it will be this perhaps unavoidable fear, to which the nations of Europe have been accustomed for centuries, that may give us the strength and the will to make ourselves invulnerable. It will be a sterner time, if we are thus to remodel ourselves into a colossus of armed strength and at the same time save our own freedoms. —H. S.

IDEAS

(*Continued from page 65*)

of analytical chemistry—finding the ultimate components rather few, although possible combinations and permutations are endless. The historian of ideas is interested not merely in systems of thought and metaphysics, but in inclusive popular labels (concepts indicated by words like "God," "progress," "romanticism," "liberty," "security," "individualism," "science)".

Histories of ideas can be written in a good many ways. Lovejoy's "The Great Chain of Being" and J. B. Bury's "The Idea of Progress" take a single concept and follow it down labyrinthine ways of time and space. This method has never been very popular in the United States, although occasional studies have been made of broad and elastic concepts—as in Charles and Mary Beard's "The American Spirit," published seven years ago as the copestone of their "Rise of American Civilization." This last volume of the four traces the idea of civilization as it has developed in the United States, opening with a chapter called "The Power of Ideas as World-Views." Although a useful book, it is marred by the partisan bitterness of Charles Beard's last phase. More numerous have been the books and essays following through time a cluster of similar ideas, or the ideas embedded in a certain cultural matrix, or ideas ascendant in a certain period or in a given political, economic, or social stratum. In other words, the history of an idea has proved less attractive to the recent American analyst than the history of related ideas.

Tracking ideas from the Old World into the New has interested some of our ablest writers in intellectual history. Among the Harvard school, for instance, Samuel Eliot Morison and Perry Miller have carefully examined the New England mind in the light of its heritage from the Renaissance and from English puritanism, while Howard Mumford Jones has brilliantly surveyed a still larger field in terms of

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. A. Hamilton Gibbs. 2. John Erskine. 3. Sinclair Lewis. 4. Thornton Wilder. 5. Erich Remarque. 6. Edna Ferber. 7. Pearl Buck. 8. Charles Morgan. 9. Hervey Allen. 10. Alexander Woollcott. 11. Lloyd C. Douglas. 12. Margaret Mitchell. 13. Dale Carnegie. 14. Marjorie K. Rawlings. 15. John Steinbeck. 16. Richard Llewellyn. 17. A. J. Cronin. 18. Marion Hargrove. 19. John Roy Carlson. 20. Lillian Smith. 21. Kathleen Winsor. 22. Betty MacDonald. 23. Russell Janney. 24. Dwight D. Eisenhower. 25. John P. Marquand.

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the European background and the American inheritance. Herbert W. Schneider, of Columbia, Clarence Faust, of Stanford, and Thomas H. Johnson, of Lawrenceville, have also explored facets of the Puritan mind—although its connection with the ethos of Protestant capitalism, so interesting to overseas scholars like Weber and Tawney, has inspired only minor research in this country. The Puritan impact upon modern America—that topic for such rowdy debate in the Twenties between Mencken and Sherman—has since received much more thoughtful treatment by Ralph Barton Perry in "Puritanism and Democracy." (And Perry, by the way, in his "Thought and Character of William James" a decade earlier set a still unsurpassed model for biography in the field of ideas.) In other sectors of colonial American culture, Louis B. Wright and T. J. Wertenbaker have ably discussed the engrafting of English ideas upon the Virginia gentleman, while beyond the limits of colonial days the evolution of Southern culture has been followed in Clement Eaton's "Freedom of Thought in the Old South" and still more widely by the late W. J. Cash's "The Mind of the South." Curtis Nettels's excellent "Roots of American Civilization" essayed a broad survey of ideas from their cultural beginnings in the Western world; while the late Evarts B. Greene in "Religion and the State" wrote about the genesis of the concept of religious freedom and its debt to Old World ideas of religious toleration (the latter receiving extended scholarly treatment from the hands of Radcliffe's President W. K. Jordan). In later eras the one-way commerce in ideas between hemisphere-inspired books like Arthur Christy's "Orient in American Transcendentalism" and Ferner Nuhn's "The Wind Blew from the East," while the global interplay of ideas found its most ambitious historian in F. S. C. Northrop, "The Meeting of East and West."

Political ideas, borrowed and homegrown, naturally drew their historians. The root ideas of American democracy, running back in theory to ancient Greece, and to the contractual aspects of the seventeenth-century Puritan covenant of grace, to "the Heavenly City of the eighteenth-century philosophers" in France and elsewhere, inspired several wise and delightful books by the late Carl L. Becker, a study of the doctrine of natural rights by Benjamin F. Wright, Jr., in 1931, and several sound monographs on the influence in America of Voltaire, Montesquieu, and Locke. In "The Course of American Democratic Thought," Yale's Ralph Gabriel wrote the pioneering history of American demo-

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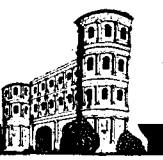

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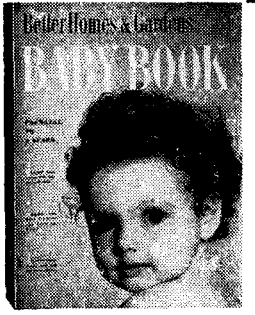

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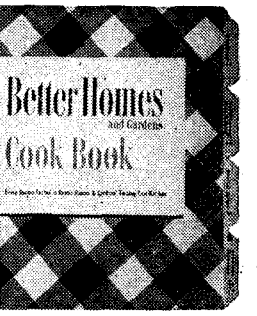

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cratic ideas—an admirable groundbreaker, but really a mosaic of stimulating lecture notes rather than a close-knit, inclusive exposition of this subject. Teachers and philosophers of politics like Charles E. Merriam, Peter Odegard, and George H. Sabine enriched the history of political ideas by general surveys; T. V. Smith in his racy and homely if angular style contributed several books on the tradition of democratic ideas, while Henry Alonzo Myers in "Are Men Equal?" added a terse but memorable review of that theory in human relations. Arthur Bestor, Jr.'s inquiry into American phalanxes studied the idea of perfectionism, as did Alice Felt Tyler's "Freedom's Ferment" and also fittingly enough, V. L. Parrington, Jr.'s youthful book "American Dreams." Ideas at work among the people figured, as secondary themes, in a host of admirable books as varied as John Hicks's "The Populist Revolt" and Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.'s "The Age of Jackson," while treatments of the American as political animal ranged from the poles of anarchism, in Eunice Schuster's study, to nationalism and imperialism, by Hans Kohn and Albert K. Weinberg.

Wisconsin's Merle Curti, who had previously examined with skill and learning the social ideas of American educators and the long debate between peace and war in our history, brought forth an illuminating book on patriotic ideals and symbols, "The Roots of American Loyalty." Curti's greatest contribution to the history of ideas, however, was his "Growth of American Thought." A social history of American ideas, it observed their seed-time and sprouting in the whole socio-economic milieu. Promptly recognized as the best inclusive book on ideas in America since Parrington, it lacked something of the earlier classic's vivacity and fluent grace but considerably surpassed it in scholarship and sound judgment.

Other good books have interpreted segments of American culture in the light of ideas kindled by the best creative minds in those times. F. O. Matthiessen's "American Renaissance," though not at bottom a history of ideas, did give uncommonly full treatment to the social, esthetic, and linguistic speculations of five great writers in the Golden Day of the 1850's. Oscar Cargill's "Intellectual America: The March of Ideas," though careless in details, handled deftly our various ideologies, chiefly those borrowed from Europe during the last half-century, while Alfred Kazin's "On Native Grounds" explored with sympathy and skill the pattern of critical ideas since Howells's heyday, and Lloyd Morris in "Postscript to Yesterday" brightly discussed the thoughts which Sumner, James, Holmes, Brandeis, and others had fed into the cultural bloodstream. Maxwell Geismar's incisive books on near-contemporary literature have also paid attention to ideas *in situ*. Not only literary critics but anthropologists have had pungent things to say about our culture—as witness the books of Margaret Mead, Clyde Kluckhohn, Ralph Linton, and the late Ruth Benedict—while a historian of ideas in technology like Roger Burlingame has helped measurably our self-understanding. Stuart Chase, Lewis Mumford, Irwin Edman, and others have reviewed the historical ties between technology and culture, the machine and the mind—meanwhile urging some better synthesis between them, lest applied science become a tool for exploitation and irresponsibility in the shadow of the atomic age.

Students of economic ideas had important contributions to make during the years of the Great Depression, the rise of totalitarian economies, the clamors of Marxist interpreters, and the cold war of the latter Forties. Certain theories popular in the previous half century could now be examined by autopsy rather than biopsy—for example, the social Darwinism of the robber barons and the folklore of rugged individualism, which Matthew Josephson, Richard Hofstadter, Louis Hacker, Bert J. Loewenberg, and Thurman Arnold helped to lay out under glass in the museum of past glories. Popular historians of revolutionary ideas, like Edmund Wilson and Max Lerner, also found a hearing, as did Joseph Dorfman in his biography of Thorstein Veblen, whose Norse ironies were rediscovered by the Depression era. Dorfman's ambitious history of American economic thought set another milestone in the history of ideas.

Perhaps the most urgent problem in the modern history of Man Thinking—the place of the individual, poised between the devil of dictatorship on one hand and the more benign but devouring deep blue sea of social controls on the other—was addressed repeatedly by philosophers, critics, and historians of ideas, summoning whatever help could be drawn from the record of the past. A single volume published in the midst of this quarter century, the theme of the Harvard Tercentenary as set forth in "Authority and the Individual," illustrates a growing literature of concern over this issue. So long as man trusts his ability to solve his own problems by taking thought, and also believes that truth needs only to be known in order to prevail in the world, then his fate as an intellectual being seems somehow likely to win through.

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AMERICAN BLEND

(*Continued from page 96*)

more important in the world of ideas than our first. For, in contemporaneous society, where area-culture relationships and group intercultural situations constitute the central problem, the conceptualization of regionalism as a structural-functional reference for the analysis of specific cultures, and their relation to each other and to the totality of area-culture situation, becomes increasingly important. Equally important is the definition of the role of regionalism in the reconstruction and balance of conflicting cultures and the clearing up of certain misconceptions about regionalism itself.

In his references to regionalism looking toward the definition of culture, T. S. Eliot complains that "the usual regionalist is concerned solely with the interests of his own region, and thereby suggests to his neighbor across the border what is of interest to one must be to the disadvantage of the other." At the same time he corrects this common misconception of regionalism by pointing out that "the absolute value is that each area should have its characteristic culture, which should also harmonize with, and enrich, the cultures of the neighboring areas." This means we must distinguish between that which concerns the area primarily and that which relates to the area in relation to other areas, or an area's place and/or role in some total structure. In the United States, both historically and functionally today this is a matter of distinguishing between the old sectionalism which features homogeneity in isolation and separatism, and the new regionalism which features differentiation and integration in an ever flexible, complex, and conflicting changing social structure. This is what Justice Brandeis foresaw in 1936, when he wrote about a necessary "first step in grappling with our most serious problem!"

The literary regionalists, however, are not the only ones who promulgate the fallacy which identifies regionalism with localism or with areal homogeneities due primarily to isolation, either in space through lack of communication and extra-regional relationships, or in time as in the case of primitive peoples. Two American sociologists may be cited specifically. In "Twentieth Century Sociology," published as recently as 1944 — and widely used by sociologists — the younger Farris writes: "The mobility and fluidity of the United States population, the diffusions and standardization of culture, and other influences

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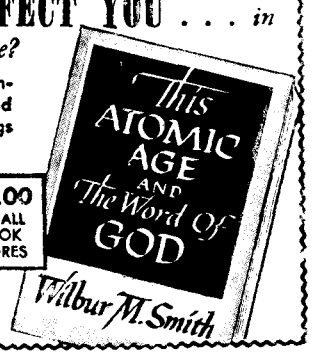

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of the sort, are having the effect of reducing the regional basis of differences in American culture. If this trend continues, as it appears likely to do, the interest in regionalism may become a historical subject." This, of course, is an absurd interpretation of both regionalism and the facts of contemporary trends.

Compare, in contrast to this, the point of view reported by another sociologist, Robert C. Angell, of the University of Michigan, who concludes from his many studies "that many believe that the chances of world peace would be greater if we cut off communication between nations altogether." Or, in contrast again, note R. M. MacIver's characterization of modern society in his admirable "The More Perfect Union." Pointing out the multiplication of conflicting groups, he says, "Many historical forces combine to make the relation of group to group the central issue of modern society. . . . Mankind has made great advances toward the solution of many of its ancient problems. But *this* problem is not only unsolved; it has become greatly aggravated. The aggravation has come in the train of technological and social change. The tendency itself is as old as human nature. . . ."

Or to take another illustration, compare F. S. C. Northrop's notable "The Meeting of East and West," in which he points out how each part of the Orient is coming to impress its existence and values upon the Occident and, "This coming can be evil and dastardly as well as it can be benign and beneficent," depending upon "each knowing the other's values and interests as well as its own." Again, "It is literally true that . . . what the one people or culture regards as sound economic and political principles the other views as erroneous, and what the one envisages as good and divine the other condemns as evil or illusory. The time has come when these ideological conflicts must be faced and if possible resolved. Otherwise the social policies, moral ideals, and religious aspirations of men, because of their incompatibility one with another, will continue to generate misunderstanding and war instead of mutual understanding and peace."

The other example of misconception is that of Professor Louis Wirth of the University of Chicago in his paper before the Wisconsin Symposium on American Regionalism in April 1949. Three of his characterizations of regionalism appear almost wholly in contradiction to the widely accepted tenets of the new regionalism. One is identifying it with the long outmoded geographic determinum. Another was to identify it as a cult. A third was to identify it with a "one-factor theory" in contrast to its multiple approach through the integration of all the social sciences, literature, and other tools of study and planning. Regionalism, he wrote, "must be recognized for what it is, namely, a one-factor theory, which taken alone will furnish only a one-sided, and hence distorted picture of social reality." And again, "it would be naive to believe that such simplistic interpretations of the complexities of social life have not obscured other equally significant elements and have led to distorted versions." This is clearly a naive confusion of regionalism with some of the special concepts of geographic factors in society or with some limited literary picture.

Perhaps we should not be surprised at the limitations of those who have not had time or occasion to sense the structural-functional meanings. For it is easy to follow the old fallacy that regionalism is essentially divisive, or is synonymous with separation, is opposed to centralization, and connotes a doctrine opposed to universalism. Here it must be emphasized that it is not regionalism *or*, but regionalism *and*, since the multiplication of divergent groups and interests in the modern world and their discovery through communication renders their integration through regional group units an absolute "must" in any construct of "One World" or "One Nation." It is not regionalism *vs.* universalism, regions *vs.* nation, but regionalism *and* universalism, regions *and* nation in such a construct as the United Nations, or the more limited construct of the unity of "The Americas," or even of "One America" envisaged by so many recent writings about the USA.

With reference to the structural-functional definitions of regionalism, it is necessary to reemphasize the fact that the primary objectives of regionalism are found in the end product of integration of regions more than the mere study and development of regions themselves. The regions are studied and planned to the end that they may be more adequate in all aspects of resources and culture; yet regionalism itself is primarily interested in the total integration and balance of these regions. In the case of

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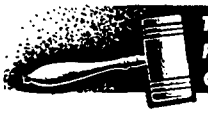
American society it is not so much a question of centralization of authority in conflict with state rights as it is developing an adequate federalized central authority capable thereby of achieving realistic decentralization. In other words, it is necessary to have some sort of world-order organization before the world's regions can be integrated and before they may be cooperatively developed at their best. In American society there must be strong national character and organization before the nation can be made strong through strength and integration of its diverse regions so that regionalism may supplant the older separatism and isolationism of sectional development.

So, too, the global situation with reference to races, minority peoples, and nationalities has made increasingly clear and vivid the organic significance of this regional quality and balance of the people everywhere. The assumptions of regional balance here are both sound theoretically and administratively practical, in so far as our key tasks must be to rediscover and catalogue all the culture groups; to recognize and give full credit to their folk personality or culture; to provide for resolving differences made more articulate by modern technology and communication; to group geographic and culture areas into regional clusterings of practical administrative proportions; to give them representation; and finally, to integrate them in the total order.

The formula for economic justice follows a similar structural-functional arrangement: first, opportunity for all people wherever they are to have access to resources and especially work in the places where they live; second, to have opportunity for access to interregional resources and contacts, thus utilizing the modern technology of communication and transportation to equalize opportunity; and third, reasonable opportunity for migration, thus utilizing the universal process of mobility.

This regional quality of culture, behavior, and institutions is, of course, as universally applicable to all regions of world society. The recognition of this regional quality of world society, of its imbalance, and of the need for regional arrangements and integration for world organization and peace, while relatively new, is rapidly becoming the basic consideration in nearly all plans for stabilizing world organization.

This discussion has to do primarily with cultural aspects of regionalism. Omitted are considerations of special phases, including regional mercantilism or economic regionalism; political aspects, often conforming to the



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Turner concept of sectionalism and affording greater difficulties in integrating the whole national organism; geographic aspects, especially economic geography; regional planning; and historical regionalism. Also omitted are measures of the changing regional structure of America, due to the above factors, as well as to the influence of the two great wars, of interregional exchange of students, of tourist travel, and the general awakening of the nation to its greater diversity and power as it enters the second half of the twentieth century. Here are dramatic and sweeping changes in the Pacific Northwest, the Pacific Southwest, the Southeast, and Southwest, where accelerated rates of change challenge the new imagination and integration. All of these are rich fields for sociological study but also afford materials for literary and artistic creative work, as, for instance, "America Surges Westward" again or as there is the revival of the North-South conflict and the Dixiecrats, or as the divergence of Southeast-Southwest culture and economy sets a trend. All these challenge new reaches in description and measurement.

Nevertheless, the framework of structural - functional regionalism which we have presented does comprehend many of the facets of these other aspects. Such a functional regionalism thus becomes a tool for attaining balance and equilibrium between people and resources, men and machines, the State and the folk. It is a tool of the democratic process in that it provides for the redistribution of the good things of life and of the opportunity to work within the framework of every people's geography and of their inherent cultural equipment. It is a tool for democratic world reconstruction, because it is through cooperative regionalism rather than economic nationalism that the society of tomorrow can be organized for human welfare instead of for military achievements. It is a tool for social planning, because it takes into consideration the rights, privileges, resources of people and areas, and stresses self-government and self-development as opposed to coercive centralized power. It is a tool for social planning also because it offers specific technical workable ways of developing and conserving resources for human-use ends. But it wants no self-sufficiency in economy. It wants no isolation and separatism, and it wants no totalitarian tragic imbalance between the folk and the State or between power and the people. What it does want is rich diversity, powerful unity, and dynamic integration in the regional balance and equality of society.

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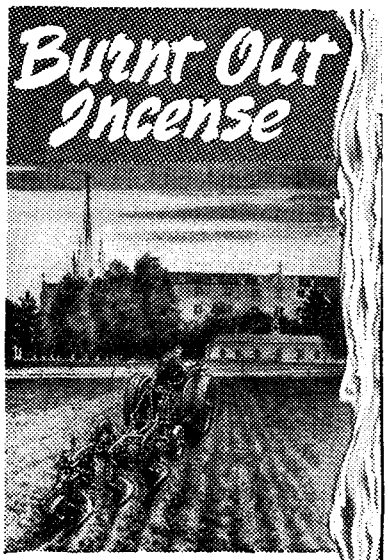
UNIVERSALISM

(*Continued from page 80*)

that man revealed the great design of his own destruction—I tried to sort my fears and hopes in an editorial for *The Saturday Review*. The gist of that editorial was that "modern" man had become obsolete, a self-made anachronism becoming more incongruous by the minute. He had exalted change in everything but himself. He had leaped centuries ahead in inventing a new world to live in, but he knew little about his own part in that world. Given time, he might be expected to bridge those gaps normally; but, by his own hand, he had destroyed even time. Communication, transportation, and war no longer waited on time. Whatever bridges had to be built and crossed would have to be built and crossed immediately.

The purpose of that editorial, I am afraid, was somewhat misunderstood. It was said that I had written a farewell to man, that I had defined a predicament from which there was neither retreat nor escape. Such was not my intention, and I have only myself to blame for not having made my purpose clear. I believed there were rational grounds for hope—tremendous hope—and I said so, but I made the mistake of bearing down so heavily on the danger that by the time I tried to discuss the possibilities of meeting that danger, the dominant mood of the editorial had been fixed in the minds of many readers.

I AM no pessimist. I doubt that any man knows enough to be a pessimist. Neither am I a reckless optimist. I do not think that things necessarily come out all right in the end if left to themselves. I do not believe that any nation or any people enjoys a natural immunity against catastrophe or a special dispensation against disaster. Survival depends on ideas and action; and before we decide what the ideas are or what the action is to be, it is essential that we become supremely aware of the danger and resolve to meet it. It was in that spirit that I wrote the editorial, which seemed to me a logical expression of everything I had learned during the process of my "re-education." Far from subtracting from an affirmative, activist philosophy built around the plastic nature of history, atomic fission added something new: the powerful ingredient of urgency. I never wavered in my confidence in the *capacity* of man to eliminate war and build a just peace, as well as to make whatever changes in himself that were dictated by the new problems and opportunities; what I tried to do was to emphasize that



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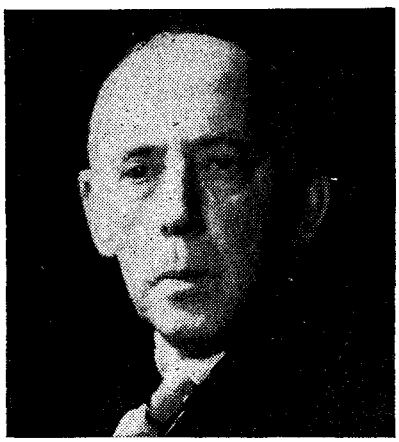

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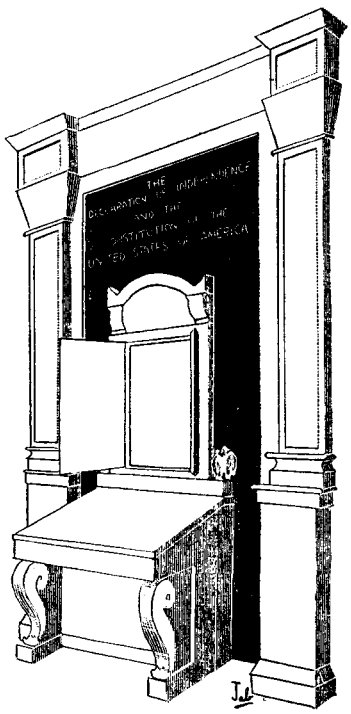
capacity rested on *decision,* and *decision* on *recognition* of the challenge.

On the political level, one of the most compelling reasons for urgency was that time was working against us. With each passing day after the end of the war, the classic and natural causes for tension and conflict between two giant nations outside a power vacuum would assert themselves unless some way could be found of eliminating the competition for power and security. When the United States and Russia looked at each other across this vacuum, the struggle to fill it would be on in earnest unless a world organization were invested both with preponderant force and a judicial structure which would be able to command the confidence of the world's peoples.

AS I write these notes midway in 1949, against the background of a steady, almost relentless, deterioration in the health of the world during the past four years, and with deep apprehensions about the consequences of such continued deterioration, I realize that the prospects of establishing a world government backed by the spirit of universalism are much remoter than they were after Hiroshima. Whatever common ground may have existed at the end of a common victory is now largely non-existent. The sides have been drawn and the question of the day seems to be not "whether" but "when."

Late as it is, however, I believe that peace is still possible. But first, a general statement may be in order:

If I believed that peace could be achieved only at the expense of principle, I would be against peace. If I believed that peace meant surrender to evil, I would be against peace. I say this though I have seen an atomic bomb explode sixteen miles away, though I have seen dozens of dead cities, their insides hollowed out by dynamite and fire, though I have seen the faces of the dead in war and the faces of the damned whose bodies but not whose minds survived. I say this though I know that the next war will see America's cities join the long procession that began with Rotterdam and Coventry and London and Berlin and ended with Hiroshima and Nagasaki.



I believe it is possible to avert this war, and to avert it with honor. If I did not believe this, whatever lessons I may have learned in my re-education thus far would have been wasted. For these lessons, in their distilled form, say that man need not lose command of his destiny, that he has deep within him the resources of courage, conscience, and the spirit to shatter his predicament, and that he can transcend the complexities and the perplexities that bedevil his existence if he can but raise a standard high enough for everyone to see and rally around. The world today hungers for ideals—not for supposedly "practical" ways out; for the curse of the twentieth century has been a grueling, biting, unrealistic materialism seeking sanction by calling itself "practical." The nation, or rather the people, that will define the ideal of a world government backed by the spirit of universalism as a basis both for survival and fulfillment, will attract to itself such massed support everywhere as will dissolve what now appear to be the ineradicable components of disaster.

It may be that the leaders of one or more nations will be able to blacken that ideal for their own peoples. No matter. The preponderance of mankind will respond at once and the rest in due course.

In saying this, I recognize that the procedures of peace are not enough. Peace that is merely non-war will be stagnant and without purpose. Government by itself can only provide a field for progress or decay; the making of world law is not the end but the beginning. The end is the supreme development and release of conscience, manifesting itself not only as a brake on conduct, but as a source of majestic inspiration in human affairs—on the individual and group both.

The foregoing article has been excerpted and adapted from a chapter in "Years of the Modern," a symposium edited by John Chase, scheduled for fall publication by Longmans, Green.

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FOOTNOTES TO 1949

(*Continued from page 19*)

or to bad novels, but to the good story likely to be successful and above the mediocre. Curiously, this criticism is oftenest applied to the worthy novel with true characterization, a deeply felt subject, a competent style, and a definite appeal to the reader of intelligence and discrimination. Phony romance, cheap sentiment, smart sophistication seldom need cutting. The author and publisher, having the same aims, which is easy sales, attend to the cutting themselves. Cut what will not sell is their motto, which is very different from the proper slogan, which is cut what does not belong in the story.

There must be some reason for this slackness in well-informed, well-intentioned writing—these novels that are thin where they should be fat and fat where they should be thin; this narrative that takes a rest in the middle and then ends in a spray of words. No such general criticism could have been made upon the technically proficient, concise, and organized good novel of the Twenties and Thirties. What has happened to the successors of Willa Cather, Ellen Glasgow, Sinclair Lewis (of "Babbitt")? Fill out the list for yourself.

FORM in the novel seems now to be the last thing the serious American novelist thinks about—and usually he thinks too late. It is fair to ask what is form in a novel. Nor is the answer difficult if the name novel be refused to hundreds of books as essentially non-fictional as an encyclopedia or a textbook which borrow it for sale purposes only. The novel is properly a story of manners, the word being used in the broadest sense. And its form is that required for effective storytelling at length. The merits of a good novel depend upon what the story is told about and how it is told. It is impossible to separate the two. The best technique cannot make a fine novel unless what is told about seems worth while. This Henry James, who knew everything about technique, illustrates in some of his most skilful and least interesting novels. The best situation loses its vitality in bad storytelling and falls like a dead anecdote from the mouth of a crude repeater.

Novel writing has its discipline like any other art, and this discipline seems to have been relaxed in current writing. No novelist should begin to write with a plot and a situation only; he must see and feel the form for his story. And yet I wonder whether the trouble is only in lack of discipline. There is plenty of evidence of hard

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work in the novels described above—often of self-defeating hard work. But this is a time of confusion in standards as in morals, and it requires a firm grasp upon the tradition of good writing to draw out the significance, to stick to the significant in a period of doubt where materialism is often confused with reality and observation with understanding. But this is not the first period of confusion which good writers have had to represent without themselves being confused. My impression is that an extraordinary number of hard-working novelists do not know nearly enough about the history and practice of their own profession.

I would take for an illustration of confused form a much advertised war novel of last year, "The Young Lions." The theme was a contrast between an intellectual of the word-monger group and a young Jew who fights himself into significance and a stoic heroism against brutalities worse than the dangers of the war. The contrast was weak; the story of the Jew one of the best we have had from the war, but the writer never makes up his mind as to which and what is his story. The novel sprawls into irrelevances (excellent reporting some of them) and multiplies incident, while he lets his real story slip through his hands like a fish, to be recaught for a chapter or two and then lost in a splashing of words and obscuring foam. Here a brilliant writer could have learned much from his predecessors in the art of telling a story.

A SCORE of different examples published in the last year or so could be drawn from regional or historical novels, usually by women, which give an impression of faithful truth by descriptions so copious as to leave the reader gasping at the industry and his own endurance while consuming so many words. Cutting helps, just as a badly fitting coat can be a little improved by shortening. But a good novel should be almost uncuttable. The design should control its length—but in these books there is no design except a plot which can be stretched like a rubber band. Editors, publishers, and critics can trim at the most, they cannot create form where it does not exist. I remember an African novel years ago which was a good story until its very end where the author had blurred her design and no reader could understand just what happened. A message was sent to the author by ship, by train, by the forked stick of a native bearer over African trails. And a new end came back by forked stick, by train, by ship and was quite as blurred as the original. The last state of that ending, when the book was published, was worse than the first.

I wonder if the powerful influence of Thomas Wolfe upon our younger writers is not somewhat responsible for a rather defiant willingness to let the typewriter run regardless. If so, then moderate talents have been aping the faults, both real and apparent, of a man of considerable genius. For with Thomas Wolfe the error was not in discipline, or in planning, it was in the scope of the design itself, too great and too unmanageable to be realized in one lifetime.

Conclusion. I am glad to turn from the ungrateful office of deplorer to take the chair of moderator of this discussion. Surely it is not decadence we are arguing, but change so rapid as to run many a good writer off the hard road into a bog of (sometimes dirty) words. The current vulgarity is not decadence so much as inability or unwillingness to lift mind above subject matter.

As for the sordid exploiters, I never heard of any period when there were not plenty. Unfortunately, the business is now profitable beyond any earlier experience. But most writers are no more sordid than most doctors, and if they slip from the familiar to the vulgar, the fault probably lies in their education. If they had less they would not be vulgar; if more they would have found it impossible to be so. What they need as writers is a real absorption of the literature which has been the symbol, if not the core, of all historic cultures. I do not mean the "hundred best books." One book might do if really assimilated as Virgil was by so many in the Middle Ages. Too much learning is constipating. Yet every would-be writer must find his sources for discipline, learn possible paths for his imagination, catch on somehow to that part of tradition in which he has power and will to work. I see no trace of this in vulgar literature, nor in a good deal of current fiction that is not vulgar at all.

As for the young war novelists, they are certainly not decadent, and one worries not about their present but their future. For if the world returns to even a partial sanity they will have to represent men and women involved in problems of human relationship which outlive all violence, all regimentation, and all the ideologies which can never solve them. These writers have not yet learned to organize patterns along which human nature in all its aspects can move. They have taken the first bloody trenches but do not yet have the equipment to maneuver upon the open fields.

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FICTION

Anderson, Sherwood	Dark Laughter	Boni	1925
Asch, Sholem	The Nazarene	Putnam	1939
Bromfield, Louis	Early Autumn	Stokes	1926
Buck, Pearl	The Good Earth	Day	1931
Burns, John Horne	The Gallery	Harper	1947
Cabell, James Branch	Something About Eve	McBride	1927
Cain, James M.	Three of a Kind	Knopf	1936–43
Caldwell, Erskine	God's Little Acre	Viking	1933
Cather, Willa	Death Comes for the Archbishop	Knopf	1927
Chandler, Raymond	Farewell, My Lovely	Knopf	1939–40
Clark, Walter Van Tilburg	The Ox-Bow Incident	Random House	1940
Cozzens, James Gould	The Just and the Unjust	Harcourt	1942
Dos Passos, John	U. S. A.	Houghton	1930–37
Douglas, Lloyd C.	The Robe	Houghton	1942
Dreiser, Theodore	An American Tragedy	Boni	1925
Edmonds, Walter D.	Drums Along the Mohawk	Little, Brown	1936
Farrell, James T.	Studs Lonigan	Vanguard	1932
Fast, Howard	Citizen Tom Paine	Duell	1943
Faulkner, William	Sanctuary	Cape	1931
Field, Rachel	Time Out of Mind	Macmillan	1935
Forbes, Esther	Paul Revere and the World He Lived In	Houghton	1942
Glasgow, Ellen	The Sheltered Life	Doubleday	1932
Hammett, Dashiell	Red Harvest	Knopf	1929
Heggen, Thomas	Mr. Roberts	Houghton	1946
Hersey, John	A Bell for Adano	Knopf	1944
Hemingway, Ernest	A Farewell to Arms	Scribner's	1929
Lea, Tom	The Brave Bulls	Little, Brown	1949
Lewis, Sinclair	Arrowsmith	Harcourt	1925
La Farge, Christopher	The Sudden Guest	Coward-McCann	1946
Marquand, John P.	The Late George Apley	Little, Brown	1937
Maxwell, William	The Folded Leaf	Harper	1945
McCullers, Carson	Member of the Wedding	Houghton	1946
Michener, James C.	Tales of the South Pacific	Macmillan	1946
Mitchell, Margaret	Gone with the Wind	Macmillan	1936
Nordhoff, C. B. & Hall, J. N.	Mutiny on the Bounty	Little, Brown	1932
O'Hara, John	Appointment in Samarra	Harcourt	1934
Rawlings, Marjorie Kinnan	The Yearling	Scribner's	1938
Richter, Conrad	Sea of Grass	Knopf	1934
Roberts, Elizabeth Madox	The Time of Man	Viking	1926
Roberts, Kenneth	Northwest Passage	Doubleday	1937
Saroyan, William	The Time of Your Life	Harcourt	1939
Shaw, Irwin	The Young Lions	Random House	1948
Sinclair, Upton	Oil	Boni	1927
Smith, Betty	A Tree Grows in Brooklyn	Harcourt	1943
Steinbeck, John	The Grapes of Wrath	Viking	1939
Stewart, George	Storm	Random House	1941
Ullman, James R.	The White Tower	Lippincott	1945
Warren, Robert Penn	All the King's Men	Harcourt	1946

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Wright, Richard	NATIVE SON	Harper	1940

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Berenson, Bernard	AESTHETICS AND HISTORY IN THE VISUAL ARTS	Pantheon	1948
Cheney, Sheldon	WORLD HISTORY OF ART	Viking	1937
Denby, Edwin	LOOKING AT THE DANCE	Pellegrini	1949
Dewey, John	ART AS EXPERIENCE	Minton	1934
Gardner, Helen	ART THROUGH THE AGES	Harcourt	1948
Lang, Paul Henry	MUSIC IN WESTERN CIVILIZATION	Norton	1941
Lomax, John & Lomax, Alan	AMERICAN BALLADS AND FOLK-SONGS	Macmillan	1934
Nathan, George Jean	THEATRE BOOK OF THE YEAR (annual since 1942-43)	Knopf	
Taylor, Francis Henry	THE TASTE OF ANGELS; A HISTORY OF ART COLLECTING FROM RAMESES TO NAPOLEON	Little, Brown	1948
Thomson, Virgil	STATE OF MUSIC	Morrow	1939

BIOGRAPHY AND AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Bowen, Catherine Drinker	YANKEE FROM OLYMPUS	Little, Brown	1944
Canby, Henry Seidel	THOREAU	Houghton	1939
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Holt, Rackham	GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER	Doubleday	1943
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Merton, Thomas	THE SEVEN STOREY MOUNTAIN	Harcourt	1948
Nevins, Allan	HAMILTON FISH	Dodd, Mead	1936
Sandburg, Carl	ABRAHAM LINCOLN: THE WAR YEARS	Harcourt	1925
Sherwood, Robert E.	ROOSEVELT AND HOPKINS	Harper	1948
Steffens, Lincoln	AUTOBIOGRAPHY	Harcourt	1931
Stein, Gertrude	AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF ALICE B. TOKLAS	Harcourt	1933
Stilwell, Joseph W.	THE STILWELL PAPERS	Wm. Sloane	1948
Van Doren, Carl	BENJAMIN FRANKLIN	Viking	1938
White, William Allen	AUTOBIOGRAPHY	Macmillan	1946
Wright, Frank Lloyd	AUTOBIOGRAPHY	Duell	1943

DRAMA

Anderson, Maxwell	WINTERSET	Anderson House	1935
Connelly, Mark C.	GREEN PASTURES	Rinehart	1929
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Miller, Arthur	DEATH OF A SALESMAN	Viking	1949
Odets, Clifford	SIX PLAYS	Random House	1939
O'Neill, Eugene	MOURNING BECOMES ELECTRA	Liveright	1931
Wilder, Thornton	OUR TOWN	Coward-McCann	1938
Williams, Tennessee	THE GLASS MENAGERIE	Random House	1945

POETRY

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Crane, Hart	WHITE BUILDINGS	Boni	1926
Cummings, E. E.	50 POEMS	Duell	1939
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Millay, Edna St. Vincent	FATAL INTERVIEW	Harper	1931
Moore, Marianne	SELECTED POEMS	Macmillan	1935
Robinson, Edwin A.	TRISTRAM	Macmillan	1927
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Arnold, Thurman	Folklore of Capitalism	Yale Univ. Press	1937
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Bowers, Claude G.	The Tragic Era	Houghton	1929
Butterfield, Roger P.	The American Past	Simon & Schuster	1947
DeVoto, Bernard	Across the Wide Missouri	Houghton	1947
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McWilliams, Carey	Mask for Privilege	Little, Brown	1948
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Sullivan, Mark	Our Times	Scribner's	1926–35
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Willkie, Wendell L.	One World	Simon & Schuster	1943
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Thurber, James	Middle-aged Man on a Flying Trapeze	Harper	1935
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LITERARY HISTORY AND CRITICISM

Brooks, Van Wyck	The Flowering of New England	Dutton	1936
Krutch, Joseph Wood	Five Masters	Harrison Smith	1930
Matthiessen, Francis O.	American Renaissance	Oxford Univ. Press	1941
Mencken, Henry L.	The American Language	Knopf	1919–48
Parrington, Vernon L.	Main Currents in American Thought	Harcourt	1927–30

NATURAL SCIENCES

Beebe, William	High Jungle	Duell	1949
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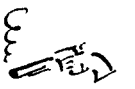

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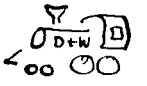

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A Ballade of Reunion

By Babette Deutsch

WHEN we were young, beggars and borrowers,
We played being old: what else was there to play?
As finished ladies, knowledgeable sirs,
We stalked or swept through every holiday
In trailing skirt and plume, to find our way
Toward that grave moment when we must defy
Very delight because it ran so high.
We made a game of grief, stifling a shout
When we should fight or flee, marry, or die,
Till dark, when make-believe was blotted out.

Slowly the rapid years, with few demurs,
Gave all we had longed for. Taller, going gray,
We learned what must be done when death occurs,
What, if work fails, or love, there is to say,
How fathers feel, and wives, and what men pay
For pleasure, for plain speaking, for a lie.
When we deceived, it was not to deny
Ignorance—we knew what we were about,
Though now we laughed because we dared not cry,
Till dark, when make-believe was blotted out.

Now, aging fast, well knowing how fate errs,
We meet—to stare and stammer and smile, astray,
With look myopic recognition blurs,
And show our secret, masking our display.
But this is a disguise, worn to gainsay
The child we knew: this face, the slackened, dry
Skin, the altered hair, the stricken eye,
A mirror, tarnished surely, framed to flout.
But we'll not find those young ones, though we try
Till dark, when make-believe is blotted out.

Prince, granted we acknowledge by and by
Final allegiance, he, and she, and I,
To you alone; meanwhile we do not doubt
Your features are best known, though never why,
Till dark, when make-believe is blotted out.

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Among Those Present

Maxwell Anderson achieved his first big success in *SRL*'s natal year. He gravitates between historical drama and plays of social protest. His latest: "Anne of the Thousand Days."

Brooks Atkinson became drama critic for *The New York Times* in 1925. He turned foreign correspondent in 1942, but, after four years in Chungking and Moscow, came back to his old love.

Iris Barry began criticizing films for the London *Daily Mail* in 1925. Later she came to this country, and for fourteen years has been head of the Museum of Modern Art's extensive film library.

Roger Butterfield, once an editor on *Life*, now devotes himself to historical research and free-lance writing. His book "The American Past" reflects a profound, imaginative feeling for Americana.

Elmer Davis, classicist, novelist, essayist, political analyst, and commentator, is a charter contributor to *SRL*. His radio news summaries early in the war won him the job of director of the Office of War Information.

Bernard De Voto, critic, essayist, historian, was editor of *SRL* during a vital period of its development, 1936-38. "Across the Wide Missouri" (1947) was a notable contribution to Americana. His present pulpit is the "Easy Chair" in *Harper's*.

Clifton Fadiman, critic, editor, ambassador-at-large to the American public in the cause of good reading, was for ten years book reviewer for *The New Yorker*. His radio career began in 1938, when he took on the role of Grand Inquisitor on "Information Please."

Lyonel Feininger, whose paintings are in galleries the world over, ended a long expatriation in 1936. He now lives and works in New York.

Lewis Gannett has been writing a daily column on books for the *New York Herald Tribune* since 1930. His new book, recently reviewed in *SRL*, is "Cream Hill."

Francis Hackett, critic and novelist, wrote his first book reviews for the *Chicago Evening Post* in 1909. He is an authority on Henry the Eighth and family.

Howard Hanson celebrates a twenty-fifth anniversary, too, this year as director of the Eastman School of Music. He belongs to the more conservative school of American composers. He is also noted as a conductor.

Howard Mumford Jones, professor of English literature at Harvard, is a specialist on the theme of American civilization. In his twenties he was a prolific playwright, now keeps to teaching and criticism.

Louis Kronenberger, who reports on drama for *Time*, has taken for his special province the robust literature of eighteenth-century Europe. "Kings and Desperate Men" was his latest book; another is on the way.

David Lilienthal began practising law about the same time that *SRL* first appeared. Appointed head of TVA by President Roosevelt in 1933, he continued until 1946. Present address: U. S. Atomic Energy Commission, Washington, D. C.

John P. Marquand progressed from newspaper work to advertising copywriting to the craft of fiction. Many of his earlier stories centered around Mr. Moto; now he sticks to upper-class life in the East.

Christopher Morley helped found *SRL* and remained as an editor until 1939. His weekly forum was THE BOWLING GREEN; in addition he conducted TRADE WINDS under the disarming pen-name of P.E.G. Quercus.

Eugene O'Neill, Jr., is a devotee of the Greek and Roman classics. He lectures widely, has edited collections of classical drama.

Howard W. Odum, one of America's leading sociologists, is former president of the Southern Regional Council. His books have made him perhaps our outstanding exponent of regionalism.

Harry A. Overstreet, professor emeritus of City College, New York, now devotes all his time to the problem of adult education. His "The Mature Mind" is this month's choice of the Book-of-the-Month Club.

Robert Sherwood can boast (though he never would) of four Pulitzer prizes. The latest was for "Roosevelt and Hopkins," the others for his plays, which have brought him public fame and the adulation of his fellow playwrights.

Dixon Wecter is an expert on American history and letters. A recent book chronicled "The Age of the Great Depression." Wecter is now compiling an edition of Mark Twain's letters.

Special Mention also for Hal McIntosh, *SRL* cover artist, who did the pen sketches of the authors, and for *SRL*'s regular editorial staff—Eloise Perry Hazard, Rochelle Girson, Raymond Walters, Jr., and Roland Gelatt—the unsung heroes of this and all other issues.

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Advertisers' Index

	Page
A & B Booksellers	129
Abingdon-Cokesbury Press	178
American Booksellers Association, Inc.	137
American Library Service	165
Ampersand Club, The	128
Annual Press	178
Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith	171
Antioch Review, The	177
Antioch Shoe Project, Inc.	157
Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc.	75
Associated British & Irish Railways	129
Barnes & Noble, Inc.	173
Beacon Press	71
Beechhurst Press, The	174
Blanchard Press, Inc.	187
Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., The	73
Book-of-the-Month Club, Inc.	Back Cover
Books, Inc.	173
Book Shop, The	173
Bookman Associates	172
Borden Printing Co., Inc.	172
Bown Adams Professional Studio, The	127
Brentano's	148
British Book Centre, Inc., The	61
British Information Services	161
Chicago Tribune	83
Circulation Associates	176
Citadel Press	153
Cosmopolitan	97
Creative Age Press, Inc.	175
Crowell Co., Thomas Y.	135
Crown Publishers, Inc.	127
Decker Press, The	172
Devin-Adair Company, The	146
Dial Press	63
Dodd, Mead & Co.	102, 103
Doubleday Book Shops	152
Doubleday & Co., Inc.	11
Duell, Sloan & Pearce, Inc.	59
Dutton & Co., Inc., E. P.	41
Exposition Press, The	165
Fairchild Publications, Inc.	166
Feagin School of Drama and Radio	126
French National Railroads	141
French National Tourist Office	131
Funk & Wagnalls Co.	147
Grune & Stratton, Inc.	160
Hall Associates, Benn	172
Hammond & Co., Inc., C. S.	134
Hampshire Bookshop, The	169
Harcourt, Brace & Co.	8, 9
Harian Publications	129, 173
Harper & Brothers	94, 95
Harvard University Press	47
Henry Holt & Co.	16
Horn Book, The	167
Hotel Algonquin	128
Houghton Mifflin Co.	36, 37
Israel Arts & Books Institute	161
Itasca Press, The	159
Junior Reviewers	171
Keedick, Lee	181
Kenedy & Sons, P. J.	173
Knopf, Inc., Alfred A.	39
Kroch's Bookstores, Inc.	85

	Page
Liberty Music Shops	154
Lippincott Co.	69
Little, Brown & Co.	43
London Gramophone Corp.	151
Longmans, Green & Co., Inc.	76, 77
McKay Co., David	155
McMurray's, The Personal Bookshop	179
Macmillan Co., The	4, 5
Macrae Smith Co.	165
Mailings, Inc.	182
Marboro Books	79
Maxwell, Lawrence R.	173
Mead Literary Agency, Daniel S.	180
Meredith Publishing Co.	167
Merriam Co., G. & C.	2
Morrow & Co., William	7
New American Library of World Literature, Inc.	136
New Directions	148, 161, 165, 168, 170, 171, 172
New York Herald Tribune	164
Norton & Company, Inc., W. W.	49
Oceana Publications	172
Oxford University Press	3
Parke-Bernet Galleries, Inc.	146
Pocket Books, Inc.	81
Prentice-Hall, Inc.	171
Putnam's Sons, G. P.	98
Random House	110, 111
Ravin, Irving	178
Regnery Co., Henry	51, 167
Rinehart & Company, Inc.	13
Ritz-Carlton Hotel, The	128
Ronald Press Co., The	158
Roy Publishers	168, 170
Saunders Co., W. B.	162
Scott, Foresman & Co.	154
Scribner's Sons, Charles	56, 57
Simon and Schuster, Inc.	106, 107
Sloane, Richard	172
Smith Co., Inc., Albert D.	163
Society of Medalists	129
Spier, Inc., Franklin	12
Stewart, Publisher, Inc., George W.	169
Story Classics	127
Superior Publishing Co.	67
Swift & Company	119
Theatre Arts Books	129
Time, Inc.	93
Travel Association of Great Britain	133
Tudor Publishing Co.	123
University of Illinois Press	163
University of Toronto Press	180
Vanguard Press, Inc.	89
Van Nostraud Co., Inc., D.	149
Vantage Press	129
Victor Animatograph Corporation	141
Viking Press, The	14, 15
Webster-Chicago Corporation	152
Whittlesey House	53
Wiley & Sons, Inc., John	156
Wilde Co., W. A.	169
Winston Co., The John C.	86, 87
Writer, Inc., The	173
Yavapai County, Arizona	129

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(Continued on page 184)

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VERSATILE, INTELLIGENT MAN of 30, background science and philosophy, with musical, literary and psychological interests, seeks unusual position, having scope, direction, interest, flexible working hours. Box 956-H.

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IMPOVERISHED PLAYWRIGHT (young, male, college graduate, veteran) seeks job providing sustenance while plying trade. What have you? Box 957-H.

WILL ICONOCLASTIC, introspective, independent, inspiring, intelligent demoiselle write young introvert? Box 958-H.

LOVELY HILLTOP HOME in New Hampshire seacoast region. Shoreline on Great Bay near Dover; stop streamliner, NYC. 60 acres, gorgeous views. Built 1940, combining old charm and modern comfort. Year round living. Poultry and other buildings, $39,500. Request brochure. Schoolcraft, Route 2, Dover, N. H.

HAVE LARGE COLLECTION my original, winning contest entries—limericks, jingles, etc. Confidential, experienced appraisal given beginner's entries—answer reasonable questions. Send $1 with question, or entry. Study one winning entry, $1. Box 970-H.

PERSONALS

WHAT IS MODERN ART? . . . How did it get that way? . . . Find out for yourself by seeing this distinctive new approach to 20th century painting in an unusually lucid color motion picture (16mm) . . . entitled, of all things, "WHAT IS MODERN ART?" . . . Available for rental or purchase to schools, libraries, museums, clubs, and interested moderns who have access to 16mm projector. Write to Department C, THE PRINCETON FILM CENTER, Princeton, N. J.

FIESTA MAGAZINE, art and literary; full volume of modern poetry, $1 per copy. Box 978-H.

DISCERNING GUY would hear from plain, unassuming, young gal, enjoying fun in the sun and sea. Box 979-H.

ORIGINAL WATER-COLOR GREETINGS. Send $2 for sample box. Delight or refund. Box 980-H.

MUSIC LOVERS, send $1 for fascinating game, Forty Master Composers (Bach to Shostakovich), satisfaction guaranteed. Frank Brewster, Swarthmore, Pa.

INTELLIGENT, humorous, talented male seeks scintillating, inspiring correspondence with feminine counterpart. Box 981-H.

YOUNG ARTIST, idealistic by nature, mature viewpoint, warm-hearted, creative, fond of music, theatre, seeks inspiration from sincere, feminine correspondent. Box 982-H.

APARTMENT WANTED. Young editor, wife, lovely daughter, 5. Near Washington Square or any NYC park. $85 tops. Box 983-H.

TELEVISION—Broadway producer, major film, theatre producing credits, cultured, imaginative, capable, seeks association with national service or educational organization, university, magazine or book publisher interested in developing television programming out of activities or literary properties. Salary or retainer basis. Resume available. Box 984-H.

WANTED: early juveniles, Greenaway, Caldecott, Gumuchian. Catalogues. Artist greeting cards. Box 985-H.

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EDITOR who does not think a few gray hairs necessarily impair gray matter, can acquire best Girl Friday he ever had by writing Box 988-H.

"WHAT MADE YOU LAUGH YESTERYEAR?" 10 different issues of The New Yorker, Puck, Punch, Judge, Life from 1890 to 1935. Special group price $10. Box 136-D.

FOR SALE: authentic Cape Cod, 75 acres, 6 rooms, 3 fireplaces, Dutch oven, brook, $3,500. David Barrett, Claremont, N. H.

REFINED YOUNG WOMAN, of simple but discriminating nature, desires correspondence with congenial, unsophisticated male. Box 933-H.

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COMPLETE SET Life magazine, 1936-1948, unbound, $98.50. (Odd and special numbers supplied.) Box 656-H.

THERE MAY BE VALUABLE BOOKS, documents, prints, manuscripts in your attic. Go on a rummage and send us a list of your discoveries for our appraisal, and possible purchase. Box 130-D.

LIBRARIAN, wife, quiet cocker seek apartment NYC, Sept. to March, $100 monthly. Box 903-H.

O'NEILL ENTHUSIAST may buy Provincetown Plays original edition and original program listing O'Neill as actor. Other O'Neill items. Box 137-D.

I'LL WORK FOR SMALL SALARY. Looking for position in home or hotel where talents of being fond of children, excellent secretarial experience, speak French, get along with people, can be of use. Under 30. Intelligent and well-mannered 3-year old daughter to go along. Box 932-H.

PERSONALS

VIEW THE WAR BETWEEN THE STATES in the panoramic pages of Brady-Miller's "Photographic History of the Civil War," 10 huge volumes, hundreds of actual on-the-spot photographs, text, $59.75. Also Harpers Weekly, 1861-65, 5 monumental volumes, 250 Weekly issues, $87.50; also New York Tribune, 1861-65, 20 elephant folio bound volumes, over 1500 separate issues, day-by-day battle reports, $575. Box 139-D.

CABIN IN BERKSHIRES. Two rooms, running water, electricity. Winterized, unfurnished. Isolation on private forest. Automobile necessary. Rare opportunity for creative work. Long rental, favorable terms. Box 944-H.

SHY female invites correspondence from male, interested in sports, music, theatre, etc. Box 949-H.

WEAN YOUR JUNIORS from those terrible comics on bound volumes of the glorious St. Nicholas Magazine. Replete with variety of subjects, illustrations of juvenile appeal; all interests. Bound volumes, 1870-1919, 6 issues to a volume, $6.75. Sample issue, $1.50 Box 136-D.

PHOTOGRAPHER WITH IMAGINATION wishes to illustrate an interesting book or article. 12 years in photography. NYC. BEekman 3-7418.

WIN ECKARDT extends felicitations cursory on THE SATURDAY REVIEW'S Twenty-Fifth Anniversary!

WIDOW, middle-aged, recently returned from China, desires position as house or traveling companion, housekeeper, experience in hotel work. Box 972-H.

VETERAN, law-student, desires to exchange views with mature, cultured female. Box 973-H.

WILL PART WITH my two Chinese Mandarin Coats, collectors' items, full length, heavily embroderied satin, $500, brocaded silk $300, other miscellaneous items. Box 974-H.

MECHANICAL ENGINEER, 15 years' experience airplane engine development, seeks engineering position utilizing unusual abilities in languages and presentation of technical information. Box 975-H.

MOTHER, 27, Phi Bete, experienced English history, music, dramatics teacher, types, needs resident position including daughter, aged 3½. Box 976-H.

ENTERPRISING YOUNG VETERAN, 26, wishes to exchange pavement-pounding for position in personnel or Labor relations; studied at Cornell. Box 977-H.

EDITOR desires contact with young, new idea woman, to conduct departments in American Home Service Magazine. Write folios. American Home Service Magazine, 51 Clinton St., Newark, N. J.

ARE YOU A DEVOTEE OF THE THEATRE? Recall the great moments, faces, play-scenes of the past through the pages of Theatre Magazine and Stage Magazine. 1900 to date. Single issues, $2; 5 issues, all different, $9; 10 issues, all different, $17. Send for free list of theatrical books. Box 140-D.

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WILL SOME GIRL interested in sailing, write to fellow interested in same? Box 937-H.

CONGENIAL LADY, versatile, invites correspondence from refined, mature gentleman. Box 938-H.

GAL, with unslacked curiosity, wants letters from physicist who can explain the world to her. Box 931-H.

THAT LOWERED HEMLINE is beautifully depicted in color fashion plates of yesteryear found in GODEYS, PETERSONS, HARPERS BAZAR. Send for free list of costume books and periodicals. Box 64-Y.

YOUNG EX-SAILOR athletic, seeks connection as chauffeur, companion, bodygaurd. Go any place, do anything. Box 925-H.

WILL A LADY read this ad and write a mature man? Box 926-H.

THE GIFT SUPREME! Donate a set or collection of books, your favorite author, subject, to your library or Alma Mater. Personal bookplates furnished. (Deductible from income tax). Details free. Box 131-D.

FOR SALE: A remodeled Vt. farmhouse near route 7. Two doubles, one single bedrooms, each with bath. Automatic oil boiler. Unfailing water. Superb view Adirondacks. 100 acres. Price: $18,000. Box 927-H.

YOUNG LADY, June college graduate, art major, desires position abroad as companion, secretary, governess. Box 936-H.

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PERSONALS

LADY, matured, gracious, versatile, desires correspondence from discerning males with integrity. Box 951-H.

MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN, educated beyond endurance, wants fling in far-away places, preferably Asia. Box 952-H.

TO MATURE, unselfish, warm-hearted lady, gentleman of culture, worldly experience, businessman, author, lecturer, impressive, offers scintillating correspondence on variety of subjects. Box 953-H.

EDUCATED BUSINESS WOMAN, wishing to leave city, will accept job as companion, chaperone, housekeeper or assistant in shop or business. Box 954-H.

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LEAVING FOR SOUTH AMERICA in Sept., will execute business or personal commissions. Box 969-H.

THE NEW YORKER MAGAZINE supplied any period. (We buy issues prior to 1935). Box 135-D.

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PERSONALS

IS THERE TRAVEL OR BUSINESS AGENCY interested in services of cultured, mature woman who knows postwar Europe like a book? Speaks French and German. Box 959-H.

SCIENTIST, European background, interested in art, psychology, nature, travel and the pursuit of happiness, desires correspondence with that rare being, a sincere, unpretentious, unconventional, young woman. Box 960-H.

SECRETARY, 25, personable, intelligent, experienced, congenial office, interview Saturdays only. Box 961-H.

WHERE CAN YOU BUY 25-YEAR-OLD SCOTCH? Ambassador "25" is the world's finest luxury scotch. Do you know the name of the dealer in your community who can supply you with 25-year-old Ambassador Imported Scotch (86% proof blended scotch whiskey)? If not, write to Colonel Henry Campbell, Quality Importers, Empire State Bldg., 350 Fifth Ave., NYC 1.

ARTIST'S—SCULPTOR'S—WRITER'S STUDIO FOR SALE: Historic coachhouse, restored along French Provincial lines. Slate roof, copper gutters. All modern improvements. Enclosed garden. Comfortable living-working quarters for creative artist. Six miles from the White House, Washington, D.C. First trust amortized at $100 a month. $5,500 cash will handle. Outstanding value, $21,500. Box 755-H.

MOONLIGHT MARINE (framed oil 14"x14") painted in exact style of and method of Albert P. Ryder, $100. Write: Box 963-H.

PERSONABLE, young professional seeks stimulus of provocative feminine correspondence. Box 964-H.

THE PERFECT BREAD AND BUTTER GIFT for that delightful weekend: 4 seashell ash trays in bronze (bell metal). Can be used as individual dinner bells! All for $5. Handsome in any interior from Georgian to modern. Stephens Hopkins, sculptor, Box 411, Alexandria, Va.

COLLEGE GRADUATE, unencumbered, versatile male, early 30s, refined, good appearance, excellent driver, seeks situation as companion, full or part-time. Box 965-H.

YOUNG MALE, southerner, intelligent, available as secretary/companion. Travel anywhere. Box 966-H.

YOUNG PENNSYLVANIAN needs board, time for writing. Expert tutor: English, mathematics, other subjects. Handy with tools, simple machinery. Zest for hard work. Extremely versatile. Let me write you. Box 967-H.

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FEMININE DILETTANTE with interesting mind and college background, seeks adventure via correspondence. Box 971-H.

CAT-LOVERS! Send $2.75 for superb National Geographic containing colored photographs all breeds. Free cat-book list on request. Box 134-D.

ACCUSTOMED TO THE BEST (but not stuffy) business executive would like to relax via correspondence with amiable, humorous, personable, female who seeks relief from the tedious (animal, vegetable, mineral). Box 1003-H.

HAVE DECIDED TO SELL what is probably one of the most attractive and well built camps in Maine. 2 miles in deep woods. 2 miles from village. Built at water's edge. 30 miles from Portland. Beautiful small lake full of bass and white perch. Equipped for winter living. One living room with ceiling to roof. One living bedroom with 2 additional bedrooms. Double floors, full insulation. Storm windows. Sea wall with stone terrace. Big covered outdoor barbecue with glass enclosure at one end. Balcony around second floor bedroom. Everything pine paneled. 2 beautiful fireplaces and auxiliary gas and electric heat. Largest size refrigerator. 10 cords of heavy wood. New combination stove, both gas and oil. Garage and tool shed. Unusual wharf suspended from trees. Electricity. Everything most unusual and perfect shape. 300 gallon oil tank. Double gas tanks. Pheasant, partridge and occasional deer. Expensive equipment. Blankets and rugs. Special made beds. Old hickory furniture. Best equipped kitchen in the country. Beautiful masonry and fireproof roofs. Hundreds of wonderful trees. Heart strings will be pulled when this is sold. Will sell the whole works including all equipment and furniture for $11,000 quick. Investment of $18,000. S. E. Gemmer, Chevrolet dealer, 83 Winslow St., Portland, Me.

PERSONALS

"OUTSPOKEN . . . STIRRING." 100 poems, mimeographed, $2. Vernon Ward, Robersonville, N.C.

REFINED, LIKEABLE young man likes fun, life, invites feminine correspondence. Box 992-H.

MATURE MALE desires feminine correspondence on humor, the outdoors, books and music. Box 993-H.

DISILLUSIONED, cynical, bored young man with sense of humor, seeks diversion via correspondence. Box 994-H.

MATURE GENTLEMAN seeks correspondence with intelligent lady on life, literature. Box 995-H.

COMPOSER—LYRICIST, versatile, wanted to work on bright libretto. Please submit resume of background. Box 996-H.

MATURE MAN WITH CAR wishes driving, cooking, grounds, New England. $35 weekly. Box 997-H.

CHILDREN'S LIBRARIAN, remedial reading tutor wants position, preferably New England. Box 1001-H.

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JOB-GETTING RESUME and letter by mail. Write: MATILDA ROGERS, Job Resume Specialist, 240 West 73 St., NYC 23.

VACATIONS

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THE WATERMAN FARM, Lebanon, Conn. Telephone: Norwich 5357-J3. Not a hotel but a refined home for appreciative guests. Art collections, large library, grand piano. Delicious meals. Swimming. Golf nearby. Weekly rates $50 up. K. H. Danzinger, Ph.D.

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DOUBLE-CROSTIC No. 802

Reg. U.S. Patent Office

By Elizabeth S. Kingsley

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
A. Any corrective treatment of maladjusted or neurotic individuals (psychol.).	123 17 29 21 157 85 106 182
B. Middle name of India's ambassadress to the U.S.	30 165 59 80 127 98 81
C. Swiss painter and sculptor, ultramodern school of art (1888-).	84 90 173 124 166
D. Ability to live, grow, and develop.	5 79 65 7 170 131 179 55 74
E. A simple sensory cell, as of a sponge.	35 97 126 174 38 117 26 77 2
F. Any grass of the genus *Calamagrostis* (2 wds.).	135 92 141 122 27 108 53 33
G. Important Negro tribe northeast of Lake Nyasa.	1 57 34 128 47 6
H. Shrubs of English hedgerows.	155 129 150 133 138 103 111 147 42
I. Most unlike.	112 32 3 51 192 184 109 172
J. Dressing tables with drawers, about three feet high.	102 44 96 161 12 100 149
K. A poisonous plant of the genus *Aconitum*.	64 40 61 118 72 91 54 87 167
L. Science of human artistic and play activities.	175 125 121 83 9 153 50 140 71 148 / 23
M. First name, V.P. of the U.S., 1869-73.	18 101 70 158 11 89 48 145
N. Last name Word M.	68 19 46 189 144 130
O. A river in Hades (Gr. myth.).	105 181 114 183 143
P. "Islands" between Asia Minor and Greece.	162 132 104 136 185 180
Q. A mountain range in New York State.	36 160 116 137 99 94 15 120 66 164
R. Adequate to wants contained within itself (comp.).	93 73 63 190 39 13 171 107 151 58 / 139 113 178
S. Strengthened.	156 188 142 75 115 67 20 31 49
T. Poetic name for a certain European nation.	193 169 134 14
U. City association for the betterment of Negroes (2 wds.).	28 186 119 4 140 56 16 25 159 88 / 22
V. Battle in Switzerland, 1388 (Swiss defeated Austrians).	82 60 152 8 45 52
W. Appellation of the pony (Western U.S.) called a cayuse.	191 177 168 110 62 41
X. Contrarily.	95 154 78 176 43 69 146 86 37
Y. Not all there (slang).	163 76 187 24

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the DEFINITIONS each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Read up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).

1 G	2 E	■	3 I	4 U	5 D	6 G	■	7 D	8 V	9 L	10 U	■	11 M	12 J	13 R	14 T
15 Q	16 U	17 A	■	18 M	19 N	■	20 S	21 A	22 U	23 L	■	24 Y	25 U	26 E	■	27 F
28 U	29 A	■	30 B	31 S	32 I	■	33 F	34 G	35 E	■	36 Q	37 X	38 E	39 R	40 K	41 W
42 H	■	43 X	44 J	45 V	46 N	■	47 G	48 M	■	49 S	50 L	51 I	52 V	■	53 F	54 K
55 D	■	56 U	57 G	58 R	59 B	■	60 V	61 K	■	62 W	63 R	64 K	65 D	66 Q	67 S	68 N
■	69 X	70 M	71 L	72 K	73 R	■	74 D	75 S	76 Y	77 E	78 X	■	79 D	80 B	■	81 B
82 V	■	83 L	84 C	85 A	■	86 X	87 K	88 U	89 M	■	90 C	91 K	92 F	■	93 R	94 Q
95 X	96 J	97 E	■	98 B	99 Q	100 J	■	101 M	102 J	103 H	104 P	■	105 O	106 A	107 R	108 F
109 I	■	110 W	111 H	112 I	113 R	■	114 O	115 S	116 Q	117 E	118 K	■	119 U	120 Q	121 L	■
122 F	123 A	124 C	125 L	■	126 E	127 B	128 G	■	129 H	130 N	131 D	132 P	■	133 H	134 T	135 F
136 P	■	137 Q	138 H	139 R	140 L	141 F	■	142 S	143 O	144 N	145 M	146 X	147 H	148 L	■	149 J
150 H	151 R	152 V	153 L	■	154 X	155 H	156 S	157 A	158 M	159 U	160 Q	■	161 J	162 P	163 Y	164 Q
■	165 B	166 C	167 K	■	168 W	169 T	170 D	171 R	172 I	■	173 C	174 E	175 L	■	176 X	177 W
178 R / 192 I	179 D / 193 T	180 P	181 O	182 A	■	183 O	184 I	185 P	186 U	187 Y	■	188 S	189 N	■	190 R	191 W

Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 170 of this issue.

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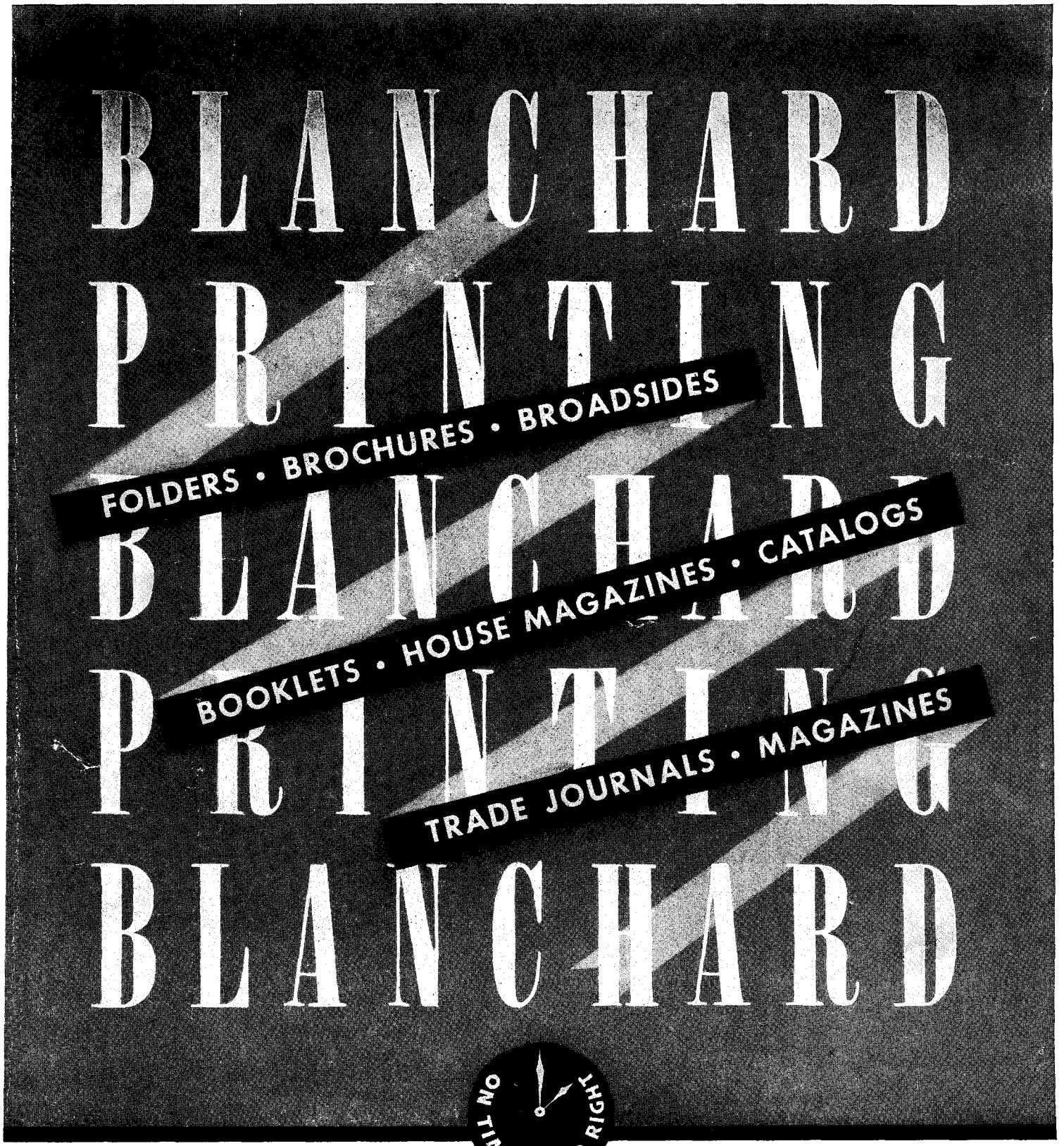

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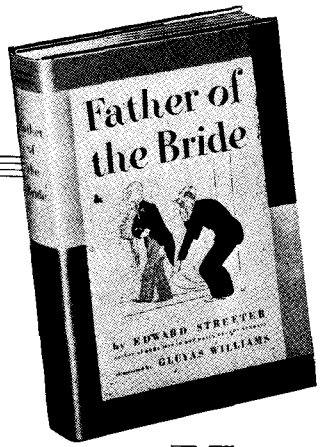

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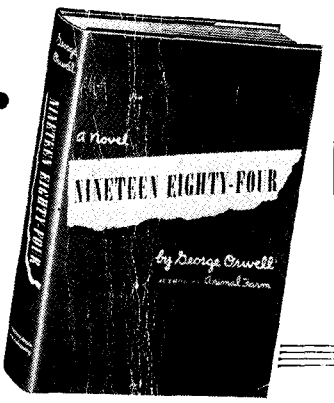

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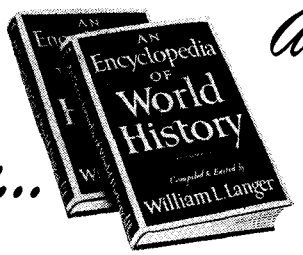

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